

# **Report of Proceedings 2021**

## **General Synod November Group of Sessions**

**Tuesday 16 November 2021 –  
Wednesday 17 November 2021**

**Church House, London**

**Transcribed by  
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## **Full Synod: First Day Tuesday 16 November 2021**

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* took the Chair at 2.45 pm.

### **ITEM 1 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOMES**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. It is my pleasure to welcome all the newly elected members of Synod, which I think is about two-thirds. It is a huge number. I know that continuing Synod members would want me to congratulate them on their election, and assure them of our willingness to support and help them through the intricacies of Synod procedures.

One particular tip I might give you on Synod procedures is it is a normal part of Synod procedures to have a siesta after lunch, particularly during Presidential Addresses. People may try to wake you up, but that is simply a joke that is played on newcomers to Synod. Pay no attention and remain deeply asleep.

But seriously, you are most welcome. It is wonderful to be together in person again and we are delighted that we have so many of you here today. May those who have been here before greet all the newcomers warmly.

I am now going to read out the names of the Bishops who are attending this group of sessions under Standing Order 123, which means they are attending in place of the Diocesan Bishop. They are the Bishop of Taunton, the Rt Revd Ruth Worsley, for the Diocese of Bath & Wells; the Bishop of Edmonton, the Rt Revd Rob Wickham, for the Diocese of Portsmouth; the Bishop of Tonbridge, the Rt Revd Simon Burton-Jones, for the Diocese of Rochester; the Bishop of Sherborne, the Rt Revd Karen Gorham, for the Diocese of Salisbury, and the Bishop of Southampton, the Rt Revd Debbie Sellin, for the Diocese of Winchester. May we welcome them warmly.

That concludes our Introductions and Welcomes and I accordingly now hand over to the Chair of our next item of business.

THE CHAIR *Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury)* took the Chair at 2.50 pm.

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, members of Synod. I spent the lockdown being told to unmute or mute because I was always on the wrong spot. I hope that fate does not follow me.

### **ITEM 2 WELCOME TO FIRST CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSIONER**

*The Chair:* We now move to Item 2 on the Agenda. I invite the Archbishop of Canterbury to give a speech of welcome to the First Church Estates Commissioner, Alan Smith.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* It is a great pleasure to welcome Alan as First Church Estates Commissioner. He was appointed a Church Commissioner in 2018 and served on the Board and on the Audit Committee, and was appointed First Church Estates Commissioner from October of this year.

It is a Crown appointment. Both Archbishops met Alan as part of the process and enthusiastically support his appointment. In our meetings and discussions with him we found that he was clearly someone with a profound commitment personally to service to Jesus Christ, a profound sense of vocation to this role and a passion for the mission and evangelism of the Church in this land, and both of us are absolutely delighted.

Alan grew up in Barbados, but moved to London in the 1980s, where he had a very successful career, most recently as senior adviser on climate and ESG risk management at the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC). He has an impressive knowledge of investment markets and risk, which makes his appointment especially timely. This is a time of challenge and complexity in the global markets, and, indeed, for the Church both global and nationally.

Whilst his huge experience around sustainability is very exciting, because we are trying to change corporate behaviour and culture; we seek to protect creation; we seek to help the vulnerable and to make the necessary healthy return to enable the Church Commissioners to support the work of the Church right across England.

Alan is a thoughtful and profoundly well-read Christian. His faith is deep but it is also critically examined. At our first meeting after his appointment together he said that he had eight points to go through with me and the eighth was, "What am I reading?" He said that is the most important. So feel free to ask him what he is reading at any point during this Synod.

Alan (as well as Eve and Loretta) has had a significant impact on justice issues wherever he has been. He has spoken powerfully about privilege. He has helped enrich our vocabulary about diversity, and he has given practical help which has improved justice in appointments. He has encouraged us to explore our connections in respect of the slave trade, and that will give us an opportunity to speak with greater authenticity, compassion and knowledge on matters of racial justice.

Alan brings a diverse perspective although he has a deep-rootedness in the Anglican Church here and internationally. We know that he feels extremely honoured to have been appointed to this important role. I would like to say on behalf of all of us that we feel greatly honoured that he is going to be working among us. I very much look forward to our partnership and to all that we can achieve together. Thank you.

*Alan Smith (ex officio):* Thank you, Archbishop Justin, for those kind words. Once someone wrote a reference for me and I showed it to my mum, and she said, "Who's that young man? I'd like to meet him." Archbishop, your words were just like that.

I am seven weeks into my role and still learning and enjoying it immensely. I would like to thank Gareth, Kylie, Matt, Maria, Vivienne and your team in the Archbishops' Council,

and so many others in the excellent team in Church House, for really helping me to make this transition go so smoothly. Also, as the Archbishop mentioned, Loretta, my predecessor, I would like to thank her publicly for leaving such a strong foundation, and for being a mentor. There are few roles someone can go into these days where you have a clean slate or strong foundation, and Loretta and my fellow Church Commissioners have left that there for me. I am really grateful for that.

I would also like to thank you, Synod, for giving me this opportunity to say these few words to introduce myself. I understand from Matt Chamberlain, who goes back in Church House to when Jesus walked the earth, that this is a very rare opportunity to get such a slot of introduction, and I am truly humbled and have a real sense of privilege to be able to do so.

Matt asked me to say a few words about who I am and what the Anglican Church means to me. I will start by saying first who I am not. I am not Alan Smith, the Bishop of St Albans. Actually, Bishop Alan, I have never met you, and I do not know if you are here today, but he has smoothed my path into the Church of England. Quite genuinely, in a couple of those early meetings I went in, and I think people saw the nameplate and thought they were getting Bishop Alan. But it did not even stop there. Someone came and told me, in particular knowing Bishop Alan and the Synod's very strong work on gambling, that Archbishop Justin and the new Archbishop Stephen were concerned that the Church Commissioners were perhaps getting into the casino end of investing and they were appointing Bishop Alan, but somehow the interview files got mixed up. Bishop Alan, I owe you a lunch of gratitude.

But who is this Alan Smith? I can define myself in terms of a series of Bs. I was born in the Bahamas. I grew up in Barbados. By the way, the Anglican Church is at its most Anglican in the Caribbean and the Church of England is at its most English in Barbados. But one of those most powerful stories which talks about the complexities but also the wonders of the Anglican Church is that I had a great great grandfather; his name was Adam Straugn "Straw" Waterman. He was born a chattel slave and when he acquired his freedom he built and restored the great Anglican Church buildings in Barbados. My engagement with and understanding of bishoprics and cathedrals, missions and pastorals, churches, parishes and church buildings comes from the distinct roots of 200 years plus of that in the Anglican Church, but, perhaps even more fundamentally, when I sit down and reflect as if Adam Straugn was looking down at us here today, I would just reflect on what a wonderful God we have. I do not think he could imagine we would be here, I would be here, so many of us would be here. As I said, my roots in Barbados and in the Anglican Church in Barbados really brought that home.

My other B, I am British. I have lived here for 36 years and been married to my wife Penny for 32 years and we have one son Ziko, who is 26. I am a bookkeeper. I qualified as a chartered accountant. I am a banker, as Archbishop Justin said. I am bearded, I am balding, I am black.

Yet it is my last B which is the most important. I am a brother, I am your brother in Christ, and, as we work together in ensuring and building a flourishing Church, the Church of all England, for all of England, it is a real privilege to be doing that.

What does this church mean to me? When offered the role my wife Penny challenged me to be very clear about what I thought my understanding of that was. Like all men married to wives, wives are relentless: when they want our opinion, they give it to us.

We came up with five things of what the Church of England is to me. It is an integral part of the physical and cultural fabric of this country. It is an integral part of our social cohesion. It is still an important part of the country's governance, in particular the work of Synod. It is a vital part of the identity of the country, and last, but definitely not least, the Church of England through its wonderful ministry is a part of God's invisible church, spreading His good news and helping to bring His Kingdom here on earth. To me God is in all five and the Synod's work covers all five.

We as Church Commissioners, in particular in our Assets Committee, are an integral part of that Church and its mission, and our mission. Recently, Archbishop Justin described the Church Commissioners as being an essential organ of the body that is the Church of England. We are pleased to be part of that body of Christ, with all of us here, and with this important work that we have ahead of us. So, as Church Commissioners, we are really looking forward to that with excitement.

I am looking forward to my lunch with Bishop Alan, and again, I would like to thank you so much for this privilege of having your gracious welcome today. Thank you very much.

*The Chair:* Thank you. That concludes this item.

THE CHAIR *Canon Izzy McDonald-Booth (Newcastle)* took the Chair at 3.02 pm.

### **ITEM 3 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. We come to Item 3, the Presidential Address. I therefore would like to invite the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York to deliver their address.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* Thank you, Chair. I should have said earlier on a serious rule of procedure that it is people's choice under the rules of the Corporation of Church House as to whether they wear masks or not.

As I have said already twice, it is a great pleasure to be at this new physical Synod. Thank you to all of you for all the time you are giving, for your commitment and for your passion. If you are new to the Synod, this is a moment of change, in which your contribution, your wisdom, your thinking, your prayer and your insight are all going to be invaluable and indispensable.

There has never been a moment, though, when the Church was without change. Change comes from society, from culture, from context, above all from the command of Christ - to transform, to be a synod, to be on the way together, to be travelling.

In John 21 the disciples go fishing. There is no sense that they are doing the wrong thing. Like many here they have to earn a living - put food on the table - so they pursue their trade. In fact, the presence of Jesus hallows the pursuit of what they are doing. Nor is there any suggested rebuke in their failure to catch fish. It happens.

But to us, reading, other stories of catching fish come to mind. Above all there is Luke's account of a catch of fish in Luke chapter 5. More than that, in John's Gospel itself we think back to John 15:5: "apart from me you can do nothing". Failing to catch is annoying. The answer to the question from the stranger on the beach is curt, "You have caught nothing, have you?" "No". The irritation is clear, but the obedience is also clear, and the result is that in a few moments they go from no fish to more fish than they can handle. They cast the net on the right side of the boat, which is my text for this talk.

The greatest danger of a Synod is that it encourages us to think that we are acting on our own, or in any case, that somehow we can do something without the intensive listening that is characteristic of the disciples after the resurrection, and is the call to all disciples today.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, our first and foremost task is to listen to Christ, above all in careful meditation on the Scriptures and in prayer. But also in listening to each other and in seeking to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit.

The Synod is thus not only a parliamentary assembly, but also a place for encounter collectively with the Living God. Which brings me to the outlook at present, and our context in which we listen.

Numerically, the number of regular churchgoers has shrunk in absolute terms every year since around 1952, 70 years next year. As a percentage of the population of England, the Church of England was at its high point, when there were accurate records, in the 1851 census when we were about 20% of the population, roughly a couple of percentage points less than what were then called the non-Conformist churches. We are today around about a little less than 2% of the population.

Institutionally, in the intervening years since 1851, we have gone through waves of change. While we are currently in the midst of such a wave, and this Synod will be crucial in how we ride that wave and how we are shaped by it, in each one there has been a fear that we would lose our tradition, our history, our past. Ever since before the Norman Conquest, indeed going far back before that to the Synod of Whitby in 664, movements of population and the evangelization of the nation have led to change.

The parish in which I served was a church plant from the Priory at Coventry in the late 13th century. A record of the 1280-1285 General Synod shows that the notetaker reported "a most noisome uproar by those of ye movement to preserve our Priories". (That last sentence is of course entirely fictional.)

In the 19th century there were creations of huge numbers of new mission churches and new parishes, or daughter churches to cope with expanding populations in urban areas. In the 20th century liturgical reform led to great protest and discontent. The parish

communion movement altered much. There were profound changes in dress, habits of churchgoing and models of church. I think it was as late as 1942 that women were permitted to attend church without wearing hats. In this century, as in the 19th, alterations in the nature of society demand change.

But change is not, must not be, cannot be, should not be, will not be, abandonment of our past.

An extraordinary, courageous and compelling indigenous Australian pastor, Pastor Ray, who I met at Glasgow the week before last and had met previously on Zoom calls - he worships at an Anglican church in Sydney Diocese - has struggled remarkably for indigenous rights in Australia. He is the seventh generation of indigenous people, of his family to be ordained, to be a pastor in Australia - and think back that it was only in 1967 that the clause in the Australian constitution that said that indigenous people were not recognised as human beings or citizens was removed, so generations before that.

He said to me a couple of weeks ago that his people talk about “walking backwards into the future”, so that they can see their past and retain that deep sense of what that past means to them. That is essential. They do move towards the future, but they do not lose sight of their traditions, their wisdom and their inheritance.

The disciples are fishing, and yet they need the call of Christ, and the equipping of Christ and the work of Christ to tell them where to fish. They preserve fishing, but they have to listen to Christ for their fishing technique.

The reality is that a huge amount of work is being done at every point of this extraordinary Church for England of which we are a part. People talk too easily of decline but miss the energy that is spurring us on.

Internally, we will be looking at reforms and changes aimed at focusing resources where they are most needed, at enabling support for anywhere and everywhere that shows the signs of the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Discernment and obedience, casting your net on the right side, requires decision and action, and they need vision and strategy. So internally, the Church of England seeks to have a clear sense of what it is and where it is going - Archbishop Stephen will speak to that in a moment.

We have gone through the greatest peacetime challenge in 400 years and emerged forging ahead. Effectiveness is being transformed, training is being rethought to work well in the very different patterns of population that we see today, and even more different that we see in the future.

The way in which dioceses work together and share resources is being challenged, and will change slowly and gently and consensually.

Our failures in safeguarding, in racism, in the way we treat those with disabilities or anyone we see - anyone - as others are being tackled, not nearly as well or as quickly as

we all want, but we know that we go wrong and we seek to do better. There is a self-awareness that is real in this Church. We are a Church that can admit it is wrong, say sorry and try - at least try - to do better.

That's all internal. Where we get to that border between external and internal: the Church has a clear and powerful vision for education of its more than 1 million people in schools and is expanding. It is planting churches in new places, casting the net in unlikely places and ways, perhaps, God-willing, as many as 10,000 new congregations in the next ten years. And essentially, because it is the foundation of this Church of and for England, resources, fresh resources are being put into traditional parishes.

Take Top Church in Dudley, there for centuries, liberal catholic in tradition (though actually they cross every boundary); a deeply hospitable church which, with the help of an SDF grant is re-finding its civic tradition, serving the poorest, welcoming those most on the edge, especially those often excluded, growing in numbers and growing in depth of worship

The Church of England is renewing ministry with chaplains, also deeply part of our tradition and our history. It is including the laity, not so much part of our tradition and history, and it is challenging clericalism. It has done the most theologically sophisticated work on human sexuality and identity of any global church. That is not my opinion, that is what others have said to us. And published a superb book, *Living in Love and Faith*, and we are seeking to work to discern how to act and how to love and how to include and welcome in the model and image of Christ.

We seek to model disagreeing well, for we are all different and disagreeing is human, but seeking to destroy and reject each other and exclude each other is less than human. The Difference course was launched last year, piloted around the world and is now being used in 26 countries, with the number going up. Difference is a course developed not by me but by colleagues working at Lambeth and other places, which encourages three reconciling habits. It enables us to disagree well; it enables us to live well together; it is based in Scripture; it is lived in daily life. The habits are to be present, to be curious, and to reimagine. All these are gifts to the world and models for it.

Every member of Synod will be sent information on the Difference course, and we are seeking to make opportunities for all who wish to, to participate in it. As part of our contribution to changing the ethos of this Church in which we work, at a time when disagreeing well in our country has seldom in the last hundred years been less strong, been weaker, I would encourage all members of the Church and the Synod to take part in this.

I was, as I often am when I am asked to do a course, a bit grumpy about it, let us be honest. When I was on sabbatical, I was told I needed to do it, because I was writing a book on reconciliation, and I was going to write about the Difference course, and being me I had sort of thought, well, if I skimmed the book that I should be able to put in a couple of quotes, to look as though I know what I am talking about. But I was told firmly by someone close to me that that was not how it was done and I was to participate. So I did, and I have all the passion of the converted. It helped me see things in an entirely new

way. I commend it to you very strongly. All these things we are doing are gifts to the world and models for the world how to disagree well.

On this day, where I heard during lunch that this morning there were attacks across the Armenian border from Azerbaijan, another reminder of war, struggle and suffering. And in mission we are working creatively to implement the excellent *Coming Home* report on housing and affordable housing, to tackle housing poverty with houses that in the theologically based words of the report “are sustainable, safe, stable, sociable and satisfying”. We are working with a commission under Paul Butler to see how to support modern families and households, and another one on social care. Health, education and housing are the three foundations of reform of our society.

But most of all, and here I speak to clergy and laity at the local level, your extraordinary work through the crisis in which we still live, has been exhausting but it has been God shaped, Christ centred. The steady, relentless but wonderful work in parish and chaplaincy has just gone on week-in and week-out, and the challenge for this Synod is to support and to secure that ministry.

Our aim is to fish on the right side, to see people find faith in Jesus Christ, to proclaim the good news in word and deed, and it is happening. Our choices and discernments are not binary. To choose one does not mean to exclude all the others. To save the parish does mean to stop church planting. To church plant does not mean abandoning the parish. Far from it, if we take either of those binary decisions, we will lose all of them, we will fail completely in every respect. To support one place to fish, one way for fishing cannot mean rejecting all the others, it is all of them.

And as we seek to see the most people possible caught up by the spirit of God and finding the love which they are offered by God in Christ, we must fish in every way, in every possible way we can and we cannot look down on anyone as blocks, obstacles or anything like that, in any way at all, ever. To use the words used by Alan, they are sisters and brothers in Christ.

This Church is not on the way out. It may be navigating shoals and rapids, storms and disagreements, we may often be foolish, we are always sinful, but at every point, including especially here, we are needing to learn to listen to the stranger on the shore, telling us where and how to fish. Cast your nets on the right side.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)*: It is often said that General Synod is the Parliament of the Church of England, and I do not think this is necessarily a very helpful analogy. It is an elected representative body. It is, as you will find out new members, a legislative body, and there is a lot of legislation we get through. But it is a Synod not a Parliament, and you have heard that several times already today.

There is no government or opposition, there are no chief whips. We sit in the round. Synod, as we have heard, means working and walking together. Pope Francis put it this way: the aim of a Synod is not to reach agreement by means of contest, between opposing positions, but to journey together to seek God’s will, allowing differences to harmonise, to meet each other with respect and trust, to believe in our unity, the unity that

we already have in Christ, because of our baptism, our baptism into the wonderful diverse people of God.

Critically, as Archbishop Justin has just outlined so powerfully, we walk together responding to the great challenges facing our world. You know, we have already met one bearded, bald man today, here is another one. You know, the harvest is rich, but actually the labourers are not few, we have got a lot of labourers at the moment in the Church of England, we have still got quite a lot of people, the trouble is the labourers are in the barn arguing over what colour to paint the combine harvester. You know, like two bald men fighting over a comb.

We are here because of our baptism to face the challenges of the world and then discerning how best to steer and steward the Church of England. We are here to find a way to work in this time and in this space. But, as Justin has also said, to walk backwards into the future, mindful of what has gone before us, where we have come from and what we decide to take with us. Therefore, this Synod builds on the work of other synods. We really do welcome all you new members and hope that you soon feel at home, but we want to welcome back old members as well, who carry that story and bring great experience and wisdom.

We are walking together into uncharted territory, the uncharted territory of living with Covid-19, the uncharted territory of climate crisis, the uncharted territory of rapidly changing cultures and the questions those cultures pose, the uncharted territory of our continuing numerical decline and all the challenges, not least the financial challenges, that go with it.

We do not have a map, okay? There is a clue in the title. It is uncharted territory. Our job, together, is to draw the map, to work out what does it mean to be the Church of England, the church for England in this day and in this age. But we do have a compass, an utterly reliable source of comfort and guidance by the Holy Spirit, the one who has told us that He himself is the way. This is the reason, drawn out of the darkest days of last year's lockdowns when everything else that was comforting and familiar about our discipleship was stripped away, when we were in isolation, when our churches were closed. It was in those days that we felt that God is calling us afresh to be a Christ-centred church and a Jesus Christ-shaped church, which is, as old Synod members will have heard me say before, the most obvious thing that anyone could say about the church, and yet so beautiful and so profound we will spend the rest of our lives learning what it means to know and follow Jesus.

And, therefore, we are simply trying to recognise that which is most basic about our identity and our life in Christ, what the Presiding Bishop of TEC, Michael Curry, calls a Jesus People, and what provinces as diverse in our Anglican Communion as Canada and Kenya call a Jesus-shaped life. And at the heart of this we put the Five Marks of Mission as the agenda for the Church's faithfulness to the call of Christ, remembering that we need all five, you cannot do a kind of Myers Briggs on the Five Marks of Mission, and say, "I am a Mark number three kind of person, and I do not have anything to do with...". no! It is a totality. But, if we do not attend to the first two, proclaiming and teaching the Gospel, let me tell you, not much else is going to happen.

And, as COP26 has shown us, there is so much work to do to safeguard the integrity of the creation. And sisters and brothers, we need the wisdom of the Gospel, the new humanity that is shown us in Christ, to be able to rise to this challenge and enable God's Church to take a lead. As we have travelled, three words have emerged that seem to capture the heart cry of the church at this time: to be simpler, humbler and bolder in our walking with Christ.

These words, and the aspirations and agendas that flow from them, build on the work of previous Synods. We walk forwards looking backwards to that. Those of you who have been on the Synod for a while will know that Simplification has been a grassroots Synod initiative for some time, challenging us to simplify and align all our resources around the life and witness of the church in the frontline, in our parishes, chaplaincies and other worshipping and witnessing communities. I pray that it continues, there is still much work to be done.

And to be humble, to be humble must, I am afraid, mean acknowledging that for us it has meant being humbled. And this has been unbearably painful for us, especially those of us whom God has asked to carry responsibility for the leadership of the church. We have had to look at some dark and terrible things about our history and IICSA, and the report *From Lament to Action*, to name only two, have revealed our failings. This Synod will work at these things. And with the LLF process, and also working on issues to do with disability and inclusion, we have a bold aspiration, and it is to be a younger and more diverse church.

I want to stand here and say this is something I am proud of. I am proud of the fact that at last the Church of England has said we need to be younger, we need to listen to the voice of the young and let the young lead us and we need to recognise our failures on issues of diversity and inclusion and, of course, these flow from the very heart of the Gospel and the new humanity we have in Christ. But, to be simpler and humbler is, of course, also a description of the Christian life itself as we learn to live differently and distinctively in an age of climate emergency and to live our life and share our faith with authenticity.

But then also bolder; our Vision and Strategy is a vision and strategy for growth, it is not about managing decline gracefully. We want the Church of England to grow, and even if it does not - I am going a bit off message here - let our death be a grand operatic death, let it be something fantastic, let us not crawl into a corner. Let us boldly declare the good news that God has shown us in Jesus Christ. This is the reason we are here, that is why you were elected so that we can declare the good news of what God has done in Jesus Christ and do everything that we can to align all our resources to make that happen in the local church, whatever the local church is, whatever manifestation it is.

We believe the Church of England can grow, and, as I say, even if it does not, for with some relief I have to remind you, God is the Evangelist, God is the Lord of the harvest. Well, that for me is a relief, it is not my job to convert anybody, that is God's job. My job is to be the joyful witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and I am determined to play my

part in leading the Church of England joyfully, without anxiety about the institution and with the song of the Gospel on my lips.

Synod, please, please, please, let us put this simple and joyful focus on Christ at the centre of all our discussions, especially when, from time-to-time, we find ourselves seeing things differently. And the Five Marks of Mission, if they shape our life together, will help us to become a church of missionary disciples. And this, too, builds on the last Synod's exciting agenda of *Everyday Faith* and *Setting God's People Free*. Because we live in rapidly changing and fearfully anxious times and because we live our lives in very different ways and in very different places, in virtual as well as actual space - I think you all know this but I am going to say it - one size is not going to fit all.

We, therefore, must care for the whole ecosystem of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ. In the Anglican tradition, place has always been very important. All clergy are ordained to a title parish, that is to a place. Ordination is not a general passing out parade, we are called to serve in a particularity. Now, I think this is even more important today as the foci of these particularities expand and diversify. That is why we talk about a mixed ecology, not because we intend to downplay parish, but because place and all places and all people are so important.

That is why we honour the vital ministry of chaplaincy, which is actually one of our biggest growth areas. And if we are to grow younger, school and university and army chaplains, I think they may be the ones who will lead the way. Therefore, forgive me for being so direct, but I have moved to Yorkshire and I have received that gift of the spirit which is known as the gift of bluntness, so - with a smile – I am going to put it bluntly. So, if you were elected on a save-the-parish ticket, I am with you. I too want to save the parish.

As far as I am concerned, you are not the loyal opposition waiting for your turn in government. The heart cry of your movement echoes in my heart and, I believe, in all our hearts, reminding us of the centrality of place, the importance of the local, of the continuity of tradition and service and why our resources must be focused on this, the local church of missionary disciples.

However, I must also say that from my observation of just about everything else in the world, and especially the story of the growth of the Christian Church from Pentecost onwards, things survive because they learn how to adapt. It is through adaptation to changed circumstances that new flourishing occurs. Please, please, let us work together. Let us never doubt that we all want the same thing, the flourishing of the Church so that the Gospel may be proclaimed. This will mean different ways of being the Church flourishing within the mixed ecology of a revitalised parish system and, as has always been the case, the most innovative ways of serving and reaching people will emerge from parishes.

The boldness of our vision is that we are praying and working for more church, not less, so that more people can know Christ. Sisters and brothers, that is what you have signed up for. That is the work of this Synod. But the test of the work will not be the survival of the institution, not even the survival of the parish, our vision must be bigger. It will be, as Advent approaches, and our thoughts turn to the last things, what did you do for the least

of these, my sisters and brothers? How did you in this quinquennium and this latest manifestation of the General Synod, serve the poor, bind up the wounded, bring home the excluded, renew the earth? Did you spend every penny you received and use your gifts and time wisely in the service of the Gospel, for the building of the Kingdom, so that Christ may be made known? Now, that is what gets me out of bed in the morning, and it is because we often fail to do it that sometimes I am kept awake at night.

Dear friends, let us work together on this, put out your nets on the right side. Thank you.

So, with a slight break from tradition, we are all so used to Zoom conferences that we thought we could not possibly have a Synod without a breakout room, so, in the few minutes remaining in this session, Archbishop Justin and I have shared our hearts and our hopes for this Church of England we love and serve, could we invite you just to turn to your neighbour, just for two or three minutes? You do not need to talk about what we have said, you can if you want, but share what is most deeply on your heart about your being part of this Synod, what you hope for in our work together, and then in a few minutes I will pray and we will get on with the business.

Your conversations were so animated I feel sure you must have been talking about something else, like the rugby or something, but we are going to finish this item in prayer.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell) and The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby) led the Synod in prayer.*

*The Chair:* Thank you very much, Archbishops. That now concludes this item of business. I now hand over to the Chair of the next item.

THE CHAIR *Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield)* took the Chair at 3.54 pm.

## **ITEM 4 REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE (GS 2233)**

*The Chair:* Synod, we now come to our next item of business, Item 4, for which you will need sight of the paper GS 2233.

This is your first opportunity to have a debate together, and we are delighted that so many of you are here for the first time. A small reminder for each person who is called to speak, if you could introduce yourself before you speak by stating your name, your Synod number and your diocese. Also, if you wish to speak, you can either stand or indicate by raising your hand should that be more comfortable for you. I am also minded to encourage you to try to speak to the content of the Agenda and the report ahead of you rather than how you might feel about things which either are or are not on the Agenda. Thank you.

I start by calling the Chair of the Business Committee, Canon Robert Hammond, and you have up to ten minutes to speak.

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford):* Well, congratulations on being elected to the eleventh quinquennium of the General Synod, now well and truly inaugurated following the magnificent Eucharist in the Abbey this morning and the historic ceremony here a few hours ago.

My name is Robert Hammond. I am a returning member of the House of Laity for Chelmsford Diocese, and I am continuing as Chair of the Business Committee for a term that will end in 2023. I am absolutely delighted, and I am sure you are too, to be meeting as Synod in our home here at Church House again. 'Tis good, Lord, to be here.

The last quinquennium, or should that be a sexennium - I am never really sure - was one of the most unusual that I think any of us could have imagined, and I do not just mean the unprecedented use of the word "unprecedented". Because of the global pandemic, the normal five-year term of Synod was extended to six years and we all learned how to Zoom. That was a challenge for us all, and I know we found it hard, frustrating and unsatisfactory at times. Thank you to all Synod members, past and present, for sticking with it to allow us to continue with our business. But here we are again, and it is a pleasure to be here in person with you in this historic building.

The elections this autumn, held electronically for the first time, saw more candidates standing than ever before, a higher voter turnout and a higher number of newly-elected representatives than before. Over 60% of you have not served on General Synod before. Some of that was due to a high number of previous Synod members not standing again, but we also saw more Synod members not being re-elected than before. The Fifth Notice Paper lists the 58 members who stood but were not re-elected by their diocese, and I would like to thank all of them for their loyal service. I am sure they will all go on to serve the Church in other ways.

All Synod members play a vital role in our Synod life together, so I am not going to highlight anyone who was not re-elected, but I thank each and every one of them for their loyal and dedicated service to our Church and to God.

Hopefully you found the induction day yesterday useful and are beginning to get to grips with the way things are done. Do not worry, we were all new once, so please, if you are unsure, ask me, ask your neighbour, your diocesan colleagues, ask your bishop - well, perhaps not - and especially the Synod staff at the desks in the Bishop Partridge Room and the Hoare Memorial Hall. Everyone will want to help you to be the best and the most effective Synod member that you can be, so please ask lots of questions.

Whilst on the subject of being the best Synod can be, can I make a request at the start of this quinquennium that we are all respectful of each other and in our dealings? Please remember that although we hold all our views and theological opinions firmly and with integrity, others may disagree and we must understand that disagreement. When speaking in this chamber, discussing in the tearoom, blogging, tweeting, Facebooking, Insta'ing, or however else you communicate at this group of sessions or after you leave it, please be very careful to always be respectful of other members' views and remember that they will hold their opinion with equal conviction to you.

We do have a voluntary Code of Conduct that may be viewed on the General Synod website. Given the exponential rise in the use of social media in recent years and some of the issues it raises for a legislative body like this one, the Business Committee will be consulting on the possibility of producing a new Code of Conduct in the future. But please do think about what you say, where you say it and the implications of saying it.

As always, the Business Committee has sought to weave prayer and worship into the group of sessions. I would like to welcome Revd Andrew Hammond as our new Synod Chaplain, and I know he would be grateful to receive any offers of assistance with our corporate worship.

You will know that we have moved to a far more electronic and online way of doing Synod now, partly for environmental reasons, partly for cost, for ease of use by Synod members and to reduce unnecessary waste. The Synod App, available on your smartphones, tablets, iPads, laptops, and probably your watches as well, but I am not sure, now has everything you need to navigate the group of sessions. Please do use the request to speak form if you would like to speak in a debate but note that it does not guarantee that you will be called and that you still need to stand in your place, if you are able to, or indicate in some other way if you do want to speak, even if you have submitted a request to speak form. We are constantly updating the app and the website so check back every so often and make sure that you keep it updated.

Whilst I am on practical matters, as ever, I know we are all extremely grateful to the Corporation of Church House and the Synod staff for making all the arrangements and keeping us as safe as possible. In organising this meeting we have been following the latest Government guidelines. You will have received a letter from the clerk setting out our Covid security arrangements as part of the pack of papers that were sent out prior to this group of sessions.

I am aware that some Synod members will be in personal situations where they feel that participating in a meeting like this one, even when it is complying with the law, is beyond what they are able to do. I respect that and regret that not everyone has been able to participate in this group of sessions. If you are watching this speech, I hope that we can welcome you to a future group of sessions. I am also aware that members will have different social distancing requirements at this meeting, and I know that we will all respect everybody's decision.

So to turn to the business before us. This is a short group of sessions, and the Business Committee has aimed to schedule business that represents a good introduction to our work together.

Later this afternoon we will debate Generosity and Diocesan Finances, which we were unable to schedule in July's online group of sessions. The Business Committee thought that this is an ideal subject for our first substantial debate as a new Synod.

Questions this evening will be in the usual format, but the Business Committee is aware that there are always concerns around Question Time and we do regularly keep it under review.

Tomorrow we have outward-looking business in the shape of a Leeds Diocesan Synod Motion on the wealth gap between the rich and the poor; some important internal matters to deal with around the Archbishops' Council budget; legislation in the form of the affirmation and proclamation of the Vacancy in See Regulation as an Act of Synod; and finally we will look at two of the items that will be major themes for this quinquennium: Vision and Strategy, and the Governance Review. These will both be presentations to allow everyone to get up to speed with them.

Once an agenda has been agreed, the Business Committee cannot alter it unless by the direction of the Joint Presidents. I know there have been calls for an emergency debate about issues in Ghana. I understand that, if called, the Archbishop of Canterbury would like to say something about that.

Returning members will recall that there was a following motion in July asking for the Clergy Conduct Measure Implementation Group to bring a report to this Synod. That work is progressing but it is not at a point where it can be brought yet. The Business Committee has agreed to defer that item - see GS Misc 1304 for further details - but we will be keeping tabs on the progress of that and all items so Synod does not lose sight of them. Another item on the horizon is the work of the Racial Justice Commission, which I hope will feature on a Synod agenda in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank members of the Business Committee for all their work over the past five years. It has been a challenging time for the Committee to deal with conducting our business online as well as some of the significant items that Synod has had to deal with. I am looking forward to working with the newly-elected Business Committee from December. As a Committee we will have a lot to do and a lot of things to think about in these changed times, including codes of conduct, the impact of social media, hybrid synods, as well as the impact on the potential future governance reforms on the life and work of this Synod. Please bear with us and engage with us as we carry out this work during the new quinquennium. I look forward to working with you all in different ways over the coming years.

Chair, I beg to move "That the Synod takes note of this Report".

*The Chair:* This item is now open for debate. I call the Archbishop of Canterbury to speak.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Justin Welby):* In response to the point made by the Chair of the Business Committee, I wanted to make a couple of comments about the situation in our relations with Ghana and in Ghana.

As I said in my first statement on the matter, which still stands, homophobia, including the criminalisation of LGBTQ+ people, is always wrong in any context. Lambeth 1.10, 1998 makes this very clear, as do various communiqués by Primates' Meetings since. Additionally, and importantly in this matter, while not condoning same-sex marriage, the

Anglican Church in Ghana does not condone the criminalisation of the LGBTQ+ community.

I continue to pray for and seek to support all those who struggle and suffer in the LGBTQ+ community and all those who suffer also from the ongoing effects of colonialism and imbalances of global power. As with many of the differences and divisions within the Anglican Communion, as Archbishop, and as one of the Instruments of Communion and what is called a focus of unity, I carry on numerous discussions in private which, if made public, would be rendered useless or even harmful.

Please join me in praying for the bishops of the Anglican Church in Ghana as they seek to bring the light and life of Christ to decision-making processes in their own country and to influence their government in defending the most vulnerable in their society.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Can I thank the Archbishop of Canterbury and ask him to pass on my thanks to those who have worked hard to secure this clarification about criminalisation from the Ghanaian bishops. It was a very serious matter indeed to hear that bishops in our sister church could support such a horrific thing and I give thanks to God for their change of approach. As a parish priest with a significant number of Ghanaians in my congregation, I know this is a matter that has touched their families in Ghana.

Uniquely, in my seventeenth year of Synod, Catholic, Evangelical and inclusive leaders signed an agreed statement strong and clear opposing the proposed Ghanaian criminalisation. I think that this makes clear that while we seek to find a path forward through the LLF process, there are times when we can come together and find a common path and voice.

I think it worth reflecting, notwithstanding my gratitude to the good offices of the Archbishop, on the way in which we all need to think very carefully about the messages we deliver. The words we speak and the statements we make, all of us, touch lives at home as well as overseas. They touch lives of Christian people in Ghana, some of them LGBTI+, and they touch the lives of people like me here.

Your Grace, I do not envy the path you have to tread, and I welcome your clear position on the matter of criminalisation, but increasingly I feel that LGBTI people in the Communion, or in parts of it, are like those small island leaders at COP pleading to be listened to while the ecclesiastical superpowers huddle together concerned about what can work for them.

Archbishop Justin, those words of yours at the inauguration touched me earlier. We do not walk alone. We are all particularly touched when people like us suffer, and we who are LGBTI+ are put in touch with feelings of fear and insecurity which we still experience in this country and in many places in the Church. And what do Christians do when we suffer? We bear witness.

So today, a simple act, not of protest or demonstration but witness, at the start of the quinquennium. I have done the sums, Synod. At least 10% of this Synod are LGBTI+.

These coming years will determine whether we are equal members or merely tolerated. Some of us, understandably not all of us today, want to be visible. We want to signify our presence to you and demonstrate our solidarity with our Ghanaian LGBTI sisters and brothers. So, those of you who wish to, please stand. Each of us is wearing a sign emphasising that we - and at least 50 people in this Synod - will be imprisonable in Ghana if this law became real.

Friends, this is just a simple gesture to remind us in the coming five years that this matter is about real lives, it is in Ghana and in here. When we speak in this Synod, when we table questions or blog, or when we publish statements that will be read by the victims of violence and those people who want to do people like me and these people here harm, may this be the last occasion we have to remind you of this. Thank you.

*Professor Helen King (Oxford):* Chair, I would like to ask the Chair of the Business Committee to explore a little further the reason why the Hereford Diocesan Synod Motion was set aside in favour of the Leeds one. I know that this has got to be something to do with the moratorium on anything related to the concerns of LLF. It is a moratorium that has been going since 2017 and is now likely to go on until 2023. I know some of the delay on LLF is obviously due to Covid and some of it is due to producing more resources that have not yet been written. So six years of moratorium.

Looking at the answers to questions to this Synod going back to 2017, I have seen so many that have called up the response, "We can't discuss this while the LLF process continues". That response has been given to questions about producing resources for schools, on gender identity and so on.

I would just like to know, how long is the list of topics that we are not allowed to discuss? So sex, sexuality, gender identity, identity maybe generally, presumably friendship since that is also something LLF talks about. I do note another Diocesan Synod Motion on the list we have been given - the Blackburn one - includes the word "marriage". Is "marriage" now a forbidden word? So please could Synod have further guidance on the forbidden words? Thank you.

*Revd Canon Simon Talbott (Ely):* Speaking on the theme of the Archbishops about moving forwards but looking backwards, at the last Synod where we gathered together in July, the Synod was pleased to accept with a considerable majority the following motion that I brought, and I am pleased to see it made reference to in the Business Committee report. Also, you will see from the papers that you have received that we have had a report from the Clergy Conduct Measure Implementation Group, and that is to be welcomed.

However, that is only two cheers, not three. It would be really good to see a timetable kept to that respects some of the damage that has been done by the Clergy Discipline Measure.

It is my privilege to act as convener for the CECA grouping here in Synod - the Church of England Clergy Advocates - who number now about 45. All of us, together with Sheldon

and together with the Ecclesiastical Law Society, see the justice of having this odious Measure taken away and something to replace it which is much more fit for purpose.

So I thank the Business Committee for mentioning that today in their report, but I do urge them to make sure that the timetable does not slip. Your clergy need this Measure to be amended, and I urgently urge the Business Committee to enable that to happen in timetabling Synod time ahead. Thank you.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham):* It was good to hear in Robert Hammond's speech that there will be an opportunity to have some discussion and engagement with the new Racial Justice Commission, but can we have a timely and early opportunity to look at, discuss and comment on the decision by the Archbishops' Council not to implement the recommendation in *From Lament to Action* relating to full-time racial justice officers for a period of five years? This has caused great disquiet in many areas and really feels like something that we should be able to engage with together on the floor of Synod.

*Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford):* I have two issues to raise. The first one is the need for a hybrid General Synod. I feel that it should not have been written off. It should be available online and in person and in my question earlier on, to be answered later on, I gather it is not going to be available. I want it to be available if needed. I think it is better safe than sorry. I am not certain if the relevant legislation is still in force. If not, it needs to be reintroduced. As the Archbishop of York, my dear friend, said a few moments ago, we are in uncharted territory in living with Covid-19, and I do not wish to see my fellow colleagues being excluded. I have received three emails from three members who are not able to be here today.

The second is to do with General Synod elections and Civica. Obviously, I am pleased I was re-elected and I have been on Synod for a long time, but I have heard of reported issues of concern, including difficulties in putting in the nomination form. Some dioceses say it was incomplete. Others told you all the way how the electoral process was going. In other words, if you got in but do not have a seconder they write back telling you. Some wanted to change the order of votes for election. Some wanted to cancel their vote and could not. Some wanted a paper ballot paper and found it difficult. Email addresses were wrong and those who wanted to not vote online found it virtually impossible.

Then I want to raise a concern over personal manifestos. Some promised the world. How it was to be delivered they did not say. Were they accurate? It is not for me to comment. Were they statements of hope? Were they of good intention? My concern was that they needed to be accurate.

We need best practice with these elections. There are a lot of lessons to be learned and I note we have current elections ongoing on at the moment, still with Civica. I do not know about the appeals process. Is it fit for purpose? I think we should be debating it during this Synod before the election process takes place.

Thank you for calling me, Chair, and I congratulate Robert on being re-elected from the Chelmsford Diocese.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry)*: Luckily, my colleague has raised some of my issues. One is not just hybrid meetings but inclusion and accommodations. I am particularly concerned having contacted the Legal Office to raise concerns about the exclusion of disabled people, particularly those who have contacted me. Having had conversations with the Legal Office, I am advised that it is of the opinion that no provision of the Equality Act applies to the Church of England, or rather General Synod, and there are no legal duties towards disabled people.

I would like to ask the Business Committee to seek legal advice and to produce that advice and share it with members, and to check with the Equality and Human Rights Commission under our accessibility policy whether we are breaching the UN Convention on Human Rights for persons with disabilities. I believe the Church and General Synod have a duty to disabled people and that they should comply with the law, and that their understanding is mistaken.

Secondly, I also wish to raise a point in relation to the way Synod works. Over the last five years or ten years I have noticed a change in Synod. We have often become ceremonial or a rubber stamp. We do not have power. There are far too many presentations and not enough time to hear questions. Today, new members, you will find that your questions will not be reached. We need more time for questions. We need more say from members of this Synod. I would ask the Business Committee to organise in February a fringe meeting to hear members of this Synod on what we want from our Synod; to have our say, to be representatives, not to be a rubber stamp that is only here to deliver what is decided elsewhere. We are the decision-makers. We need to be consulted and to represent the people whom we have been elected to serve and to give voice to. Thank you, Chair.

*The Chair*: After Debbie Buggs I am going to allow one more speech of two minutes and then propose a motion for closure.

*Miss Debbie Buggs (London)*: The report of proceedings is a valuable record of General Synod, not least, Madam Chairman, they furnish future Archbishops with a source of quotations, as we have just heard. We have on the website the report of proceedings from the group of sessions in November 2020, all 267 pages of it. However, we are still waiting for the reports for February, April and July of 2021. In the next report of the Business Committee please could we have an update on the progress of those reports. Thank you.

*Revd Sam Maginnis (Chelmsford)*: First, I would like to reiterate what my friend and fellow member of CECA, Simon Talbott, said about his following motion from July's CDM debate, which was passed with a majority of 238 to 32, and the clear expression of Synod's desire to avoid any further lengthy delays in replacing the Clergy Discipline Measure, with all its manifest defects, and therefore the need for the new CCM

Implementation Group to come before Synod with a legislative Green Paper in July as it has proposed in its first progress report.

I would like to make one more comment on GS Misc 1304. Looking at appendix A, the membership list, we see that the group is made up of several senior clergy, a senior ecclesiastical lawyer, a union member, a member of the House of Laity and the Diocesan Registrar, but there is no independent HR voice currently on the group.

Now, among the many, many horror stories of the CDM that we have heard over recent years, both through the work of the Sheldon Hub and through the research performed by the independent working party on the CDM commissioned by the Ecclesiastical Law Society (of which I was the Secretary), we have seen that a number of the ordeals clergy have endured are not simply matters of ineffective legal process or failure in pastoral care but also a lack of adequate and consistent HR procedures, which you would expect to be in place in any large organisation.

The CDM as it has been and currently stands is not only a failure in fairness to all parties involved in complaints against clergy, and a failure in transparency or in swift response; it is also a failure in basic organisation and people management. If we as the Church truly seek to model God's Kingdom then we must work out how we support and relate to others at every level within the institutional life of the Church. Therefore, I implore the Implementation Group to please appoint an independent HR voice onto its membership before it meets again next week and continues with its deliberations.

*The Chair:* I now wish to test the mind of Synod as to whether Item 4 has been sufficiently debated.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I now invite Canon Robert Hammond to respond to the debate. You have five minutes.

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford):* To the Archbishop of Canterbury and to the Prolocutor for Canterbury, thank you for that clarity, your Grace, and the comments which Synod will have seen and will have heard.

To Helen King on how long is the forbidden list, there is not a forbidden list. Each item is taken on its own merits and the Business Committee carefully considers each item and how it fits any particular package of activity that is being considered for business.

To Simon Talbott and the timetable slipping for the Clergy Conduct Measure, work is under way on that and the Business Committee, although it cannot control that work, will keep an eye on that, and we would not want to lose that.

To Priscilla White and the racial justice officers, that is a matter for the Archbishops' Council, who will have heard what you have said.

To Peter Bruinvels for a hybrid Synod, yes, decisions have been taken at the moment for hybrid Synods, but that will be a decision for the new Business Committee when it is elected. And then your other comments relating to elections and to personal manifestos, following every new quinquennium the Business Committee creates an elections review group, and it will look at all of those issues that you have said there, and would be very pleased to receive any submissions as it carries out that review of the recent election process.

To Sam Margrave, the Business Committee trusts the legal advice that it receives. Business comes from many sources and, of course, there is always the option to create or to put down a Private Member's Motion for something that you particularly want to see debated on the floor of Synod.

To Debbie Buggs and the proceedings, I do not think the February meeting was a formal meeting, so therefore there will not be proceedings of that, but I apologise that the other proceedings have not been created. The staff will get that done as soon as possible.

Finally to Sam Maginnis, the Implementation Group will have heard what you said. That is not something directly for the Business Committee I am, afraid. Thank you, Chair.

*The Chair:* I now put Item 4 to the vote.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That now concludes this Item of business.

*Canon Professor Joyce Hill (Leeds)* took the Chair at 4.30 pm.

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. May we resume the Agenda, please? We come now to Item 5 on the Agenda on Generosity and Diocesan Finances, but before we move on to the business may I make one small housekeeping point? The wi-fi in Church House is being heavily overloaded at the moment. That probably does not surprise anybody, but the housekeeping request is, therefore, would you please confine yourself to one device. That would actually help, we think. If you could exercise a little bit of self-restraint and not multi-task on a massive scale but confine yourself to one device, that will be helpful. Thank you very much for that.

## **ITEM 5 GENEROSITY AND DIOCESAN FINANCES (GS 2234)**

*The Chair:* We come now to Item 5 on the Agenda on Generosity and Diocesan Finances. You will see the motion on the Order Paper and it is in the documentation that you have already received, which is GS 2234. We will have a vote at the end of this debate, but I just want to make clear at the outset, because we are learning our way through the procedures of Synod, that this is a debate about direction of travel. It is not a debate about substantive detail that if we pass the motion will come to us down the track. That

is just to be clear. We are not making final decisions here. We are voting on direction of travel.

I call upon the Bishop of Sheffield to speak and move the motion. He may have up to ten minutes.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox):* Friends, the legislation we are proposing today would remove an existing restriction on how particular historical endowments in dioceses can be used, giving dioceses more ability (but no obligation) to be generous.

If you looked closely at this motion, and knew a bit about the financial challenges which were already present for many dioceses across the Church of England, even before the pandemic, you will realise that this proposal is not in itself capable of fixing the whole problem. This motion is a first step which can open up for us an urgently necessary conversation about the full extent of the problem which is this: the inequalities in financial resources which exist between dioceses result in inequalities in missionary and pastoral freedom, and in options for resourcing the cure of souls, for maintaining a vigorous stipendiary ordained community in the most deprived communities in the country, so that in every place we can bring the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and make it known to those in our care.

This motion was originally due to be heard last July but was delayed to this group of sessions because prolonged Covid restrictions required the summer Synod to be moved online. I regard that postponement as a gift of God's providence because that bigger conversation about how to resource the cure of souls more fairly across the country will not be a short conversation. It might be a five-year conversation, in which case I am glad it is beginning at the start of a quinquennium with a new Synod whose members can follow it through.

You see, the financing of the mission of the Church of England, primarily through parishes, but also in other ways, is a complicated interplay between at least six pots of money. There are historic diocesan assets which are the subject of this motion. There are wider diocesan assets which are bigger. There are the assets of the Church Commissioners which are bigger again. There are the assets of cathedrals and parishes, which are not small, and there is parish income, in particular from worshippers through voluntary giving.

Any comprehensive solution to the problem will need to take all these pots of money into account even though each has its own anomalies. That in turn means that a comprehensive solution will have to tie in to the substantial review processes currently under way in relation to both governance and Transforming Effectiveness.

Let me touch briefly on those various pots of money. First, there is historic endowment and glebe, which was consolidated into the hands of diocesan boards of finance in 1976, funds with which this motion is directly concerned. But that consolidation was within dioceses and did not address the underlying inequality between dioceses, which remained with us 50 years later. Most of you will have seen the table ranking dioceses

by historic assets in 2019, Oxford and Lincoln at the top with £166 million and £101 million, Canterbury and Liverpool at the bottom with £2.7 million and £1.5 million.

The terms of the 1976 Measure restrict the use of these historic assets to paying those engaged in the cure of souls within the particular diocese, which means more wealthy dioceses are not permitted to share them with less wealthy ones. Some dioceses, including Oxford, have found creative ways to be generous but not out of funds governed by the 1976 Measure, so the level of potential generosity is limited. Today's motion aims to remove this constraint to give better endowed dioceses more freedom to be generous, so this step is not futile.

But this step is not a complete solution either. The funds governed by the 1976 Measure amount to only just over a third of total aggregated assets of dioceses. The inequalities are as disturbing when total assets are taken into account, as they are when historic assets only are under consideration. Any answer to the question how to resource the cure of souls more fairly throughout the country will ultimately have to take total assets into account and not just historic ones. Of course, there is the £9.2 billion held by the Church Commissioners, which is about double the aggregate total assets held by dioceses, although, in fact, around £1.6 billion of that sum is ring-fenced to meet commitments in relation to clergy pensions. It goes without saying that any answer to that question will have to take the Commissioners' assets into account too.

Then there are assets held by cathedrals, also unequally. Parishes have assets as well. Indeed, I am told that in the decade 2009 to 2019, while aggregate DBF expenditure exceeded income, aggregate parish income exceeded expenditure by over £250 million. It should therefore go without saying that any answer to the question of how to resource the cure of souls more fairly across the country will have to take cathedral and parish assets into account too.

Then there are three other inequalities to note. The first is the extent to which dioceses depend on parish share or common fund income. In 2020 in Guildford over 90% of DBF income came from parish share contributions whereas in Lincoln it was less than 40%. In some dioceses the size of their historic endowment may have hampered efforts at stimulating parish contributions to a common fund.

Secondly, the disparities between dioceses are also reflected within dioceses. In Sheffield, for example, the common fund contribution as a percentage of unrestricted PCC income varied in 2019 between 3% and 81%, and similar disparities exist in most dioceses. And then finally there are equally anomalous disparities between parishes in the extent to which they have been able to foster generous giving let alone a pattern of tithing among those who worship regularly.

We have not embedded consistently in our churches the teaching of Jesus that the generous sharing of our money is a sure sign of our hope in the coming Kingdom of God. Any truly comprehensive answer to the question of how to resource the cure of souls more fairly across the country will have to take all these anomalies and disparities into account.

In dioceses like Sheffield, where the board of finance is struggling to make ends meet, we need a comprehensive new settlement. In our diocese as recently as 1999 there were 155 stipendiary incumbents. Twenty years later, by 2019 there were just 103. Cuts to the numerical strength of the stipendiary clergy cohort are not new, at least in dioceses like ours: they reflect both longstanding inequalities in financial resource and longstanding trajectories of decline. Arguably, the 1976 Measure was itself an attempt to address this problem, as was the resourcing the future reforms introduced by the Commissioners in 2017, which included the creation of Lowest Income Communities Funding.

No doubt if the solution were simple, we would already have found it, and yet the Church of England is not poor. The combined wealth of the Church Commissioners, dioceses, cathedrals, parishes and individual worshippers is more than sufficient to enable higher levels of stipendiary incomes. If we are to ensure that financial resources are fairly and effectively distributed, all these pots will have to be in play. Meanwhile, the Church seeks to turn around its decline, but those with the fewest resources have the least firepower to do so, and may have to cut back still further.

This, friends, is the conversation we are beginning today. To repeat, the legislative proposals commended in this motion would simply remove an existing restriction on the use of historic assets, giving dioceses greater freedom (but no obligation) to be more generous. The Gospel demands no less. But the Mutuality in Finances Task Group, which I have the joy of chairing, and which has framed the motion before you today has one further hope, which is the way in which we engage in this conversation today, and in the rest of this quinquennium, will itself build reciprocity and model generosity. We seek a new financial settlement which will enable the Church of England to be a simpler, humbler, bolder church; a settlement that really will enable us to resource the cure of souls more fairly throughout the country, and to maintain a vigorous stipendiary ordained ministry in the most deprived communities in the land so that in every place we can bring the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and make Him known to those in our care. In that spirit, as a first step along the path, I move the motion. Thank you.

*The Chair:* The motion is now open for debate. I call upon Julie Dziegiel. I am sorry there are so many people I do not know yet. That is inevitable, is it not? Do I see Andrew Orange standing? I do. Julie Dziegiel and Andrew Orange. You both have five minutes as a speech limit.

*Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford):* I am a member of the Mutuality in Finances Group, the Archbishops' Council Finance Committee and in Oxford Diocese the Bishop's Council and the finance committee, so I am rather in the crosshairs on this one.

It is clear that there is considerable inequality in the financial situations of our dioceses. If you think only about the historic assets, those transferred from the parishes to the dioceses under the Endowments and Glebe Measure 1976, which is where this conversation starts, initially it seems simple enough.

For my own personal interest, I compiled some spreadsheets based on figures for the diocesan stipends funds, which is how these historic assets are held in diocesan accounts, to look at what redistribution would look like on different bases.

It was interesting. I shared those figures with others within Oxford Diocese. Oxford has, of all the dioceses, the highest value of assets in its diocesan stipends fund, but it is not the highest value of assets by head of population, or by head of Church of England attendees in the diocese. In fact, Oxford does not come second in either, which is not to say that Oxford is not relatively rich, because we are.

I was looking at the value of diocesan stipend funds now - actually in 2017 because that is when I had the figures for - but not far from now. Much has happened over the years since those assets were transferred in the late 1970s, and looking at the history of this has been absolutely fascinating. The dioceses have handled those assets and accounted for those assets differently. I have also tried looking at the accounts of various dioceses, and that was great fun, but I would not say they added much clarity; more questions, in fact. I, of course, have only been looking at the dioceses. As Bishop Pete outlined, we are likely to need to take into account other forms of church wealth in parishes, in the Church Commissioners - everywhere.

This is complicated. But there is inequality and that means in some places our Church is less able to grow the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and that is simply not right. We need to do more work, look at all forms of growth and work our way through the complexity, I hope, to some form of sense of simplicity and solution on the other side.

Meanwhile, it is important that we encourage and facilitate generosity between dioceses to make a start to this. This does not need to wait and it can be done now and that is what this motion is about. Of course, generosity is also limited by a simple lack of money. It is not easy to be generous when you have not got the funds. On that point, please can I commend dioceses, particularly those perhaps in the top half of the wealth, to look at total return accounting. It has been a game changer for Oxford Diocese and it does have the possibility of freeing up funds both for mission within your diocese and also enabling funds for generosity. Please pass this motion enabling generosity so Jesus Christ can be made known more in the less wealthy parts of our land.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I call Andrew Orange for what I believe is his maiden speech, am I correct?

*Mr Andrew Orange (Winchester):* Yes. Who would be against generosity and so, on the face of it, this motion is good. But I think we have to be a bit careful. What if we are being generous with other people's money and not our own? I am glad that the Bishop mentioned the need for recognising pots of money because I want to speak for just a moment from my experience, which I am sure echoes that of many in this chamber, of being a churchwarden and donations secretary in a small parish on the Hampshire/Wiltshire border.

Inheriting a £7,000 annual deficit, you have to take action. You write personal letters of appeal, including to those who do not go to church very frequently. In the end, after a lot of work, you get just enough to extinguish the deficit. You know it is all because of sacrificial giving from kind, local people who want to sustain the parish church and keep it as a Christian presence in the heart of their village.

Now here is my worry. By this motion, we may further erode the trust between parish and diocese which is so important for us to maintain. If people discover that their donation money is, in fact, leaking out to the diocese and from there leaking out to help other unknown dioceses, I am afraid they will feel it has been misappropriated and, quite likely, they will not give again. Parish Share is accepted in parishes if it is seen to be paying some of a priest's stipend. But, increasingly, parishes have no incumbent priest and so I worry how it will look when dioceses take the money and then pass it on to other dioceses as if it is theirs.

Also - apologies, I am an accountant - I am a little bit worried about the muddling of wealth and assets on the one hand and income on the other that I see in the paper GS 1296. Wealth is a trust comprising assets given to us by previous generations and it is not to be disposed of to secure current gain. If we do that in the commercial world, we call it asset stripping. No, assets are to be cherished and looked after carefully. By the way, as it is acknowledged in paragraph 4 of the paper, there are often times when these assets do not give very much income. I think we risk to focus a little bit too much on assets and we should be thinking more about income. I think the laudable aim - and it is a very laudable aim - of better sustaining less well-off dioceses should be done by a combination of selective allocation of Church Commissioners' income and by a specific appeal to a separate fund.

*Revd Canon Andy Salmon (Manchester):* The financial situation in many of our dioceses is grim. I know a bit about our situation in Manchester, but I also get to see reports on the situation across the Church of England through being on Archbishops' Council Finance Committee. I know that Manchester is not the only diocese running a deficit budget and facing tough decisions about which clergy will not be replaced and about which churches will have to share which clergy.

Do not get me wrong, there are some really good things happening in Manchester Diocese, but where good things are happening it is because of our creative and our resourcefulness and, of course, God's good provision. It is not because of our inherited wealth supporting things. I support this motion, but I want to plead with the Mutuality in Finances Group to not only make this happen but also to come back with bigger and bolder proposals. I do accept that it is complicated, as we have already heard, and we will have to use a great deal of imagination and creativity to come back with solutions that help the poorer, to help to share the burden more across our nation.

We have a nation that is crying out for the Gospel. Many of the areas that have the greatest need for a strong visible Church offering the love of God in a variety of ways in their community are the areas in the poorer dioceses that are busy cutting posts and selling off parsonages to make ends meet.

A quick note to new Synod members. I have been on Synod 11 years and still have not worked how to pronounce "dioceses", "dioceses", "dioceses". Whatever it is, we have quite a few of them and some are much poorer than others. I realise that it is not only the northern urban dioceses but the northern urban dioceses are the bulk of the poorer dioceses, as you will see from the appendix at the end of the paper.

It is a good thing to be proposing to make it easier for dioceses to choose to support one another, but let us go further and find ways to genuinely share the resources that we have. I am absolutely sure that the likes of Lincoln and Coventry and Oxford have real needs, but are those needs so much greater than the needs of somewhere like Liverpool? Of course not. Please support this motion, but please would the Mutuality in Finances Group continue working to come up with further more radical proposals.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool)*: I welcome this paper very much and the work the Bishop of Sheffield and his group have done on this. As the paper sets out, the last time this Synod discussed this was back in 2001. I was a newbie on Synod in 2001 and I fully expected that we would pass such a resolution and we did not. Now, 20 years on, we are discussing this again and we have not discussed it since.

I have good news and I have bad news. The good news is that we have more than enough financial resource within the Church of England to reach every man, woman and child with the good news of Jesus Christ.

The bad news is that many of us in this room might be stopping that from happening and we could make it happen by passing this motion today. Jesus once told a story about servants who were given talents and in the story they were rewarded for how they used their talents. From this we have learnt the importance of being good stewards of everything that God has given us. I used to be part of the peer review programme in the Church of England when a team of three, drawn from every diocese in the Church of England, would go into a diocese and help review the senior staff about how they were doing as a diocese and, more especially, how they were being good stewards of their human and financial resources. It was an attempt to introduce some mutual accountability and to help dioceses improve their stewardship of the resources that they had been given.

I believe strongly that people give where there is a vision and people do not give where there is not a vision. The vision that we have been exploring over these last few months is a compelling vision. Let us get behind it. If we believe that financial inequality in our country and in our world is a bad thing, then we should be concerned about financial inequality within the Church. If we want to speak about financial inequality in our world and in our country, then we need to put our own house in order, members of Synod. In fact, if we call ourselves “the Church of England”, this could be something that could bring us together in common. We could share our resources to enable dioceses to do what they would like to do but they cannot because of financial resources.

I would like to thank Oxford Diocese for their donation to dioceses like Liverpool and assure them that the £50,000 they have given us this year and for the next three years will be put to good use and will enable us to do something that we have not been able to do before. I would like to finish by thanking Oxford for making us feel, like the words of the anthem of the greatest football team in the world, Liverpool FC, you will never walk alone.

*The Chair:* The Bishop of Gloucester for two minutes and, after the Bishop of Gloucester, Arwen Folkes, who will have five minutes because it is a maiden speech.

*The Bishop of Gloucester (Rt Revd Rachel Treweek):* I want to strongly support this motion. Ever since I became an archdeacon, I was wearied by haggles over how Common Fund or Parish Share is worked out and my weariness is because so often our focus on responding to God's immense generosity gets lost and our imaginations become dulled. We need to stop talking about paying and taking and focus on giving. This is what this motion is doing. It is also appealing to our imaginations.

Let us be clear, this is not about taking finances from dioceses. Indeed, that cannot be done. What this motion does is make it possible for dioceses to be as generous as they wish to be. It is about kindling our imagination. We are not always good in the Church at painting that Kingdom vision of what the future could look like if we continually rooted ourselves in God's mission of transformation and reconciliation. We are good at trying to fix things, but often without first really identifying what good and effective could look like and where we are trying to get to.

I do not want a conversation which feels rather like we are talking about how many pots and pans and utensils and ingredients we each have in our diocesan kitchens and how we could share them out more equally. I do want to imagine Kingdom-like banquets and meals in every place with people of all ages and backgrounds sat around the table being fed, building relationships and community and encountering Jesus Christ.

To be excited by that picture, I believe we will be inspired to give away kitchen equipment and ingredients in order to make the dream a reality. Our Bishop's Council in the Diocese of Gloucester caught that vision about providing housing in our country to create homes and communities which leave no one out. With that vision, we were willing to give away funding to forward the national work of the Archbishops' Housing Commission. I absolutely urge us to vote in favour.

*Revd Arwen Folkes (Chichester):* Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to speak in favour of this motion. I would just like to raise three points in well under the five minutes in an attempt to garner popularity from this new Synod.

First of all, I would like to make an observation, which is that I note the importance of moving forward with this today given the Special Agenda Diocesan Synod Motion tabled for tomorrow where we will consider asking Her Majesty's Government and all political parties to adopt an explicit policy of reducing the wealth gap between the rich and the poor. It seems perfectly obvious that any reluctance or reticence to do the same within our same household would render us in a state of hypocrisy making tomorrow's item redundant. Furthermore, inter-diocesan generosity would be a powerful example for encouraging similarly generous moods between our parishes.

The second point I would like to make is that, when it comes to working out the detail, particularly around the glebe assets, I would like to see that we enable the transfer of capital rather than just the investment income raised from it. I believe this would give the

receiving diocese a greater stability. The trouble with only gifting the investment income is that the rug could be pulled rather quickly should the gifting diocese become twitchy in the future.

Finally, and my third point, I would like to ask that we consider carefully how such monies should be used within the receiving diocese. I note the allocation of SDF monies elsewhere for resource and new projects. Therefore, given the historic connection of these particular monies to the parishes from which they originated, may I humbly, simply and boldly ask that this particular area of financial generosity be ring-fenced for clergy stipends and direct parish administrative support, thereby enabling us to shore up our parish presence in every community and strengthen the parishes at the same time as we strongly resource elsewhere. From my position as a parish incumbent, I know that this would be a vitally important and morale boosting confirmation of our true commitment to parish ministry.

*The Chair:* Prudence Dailey for two minutes and, after Prudence Bailey, I would like to call Nigel Bacon, also for two minutes. Bearing in mind what follows this is a timed item of business, which we really need to begin bang on time, which is Question Time, I might be looking for a motion for closure at that point.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* The Bishop's opening speech rather sounded as though he wanted to raid parish funds, but I shall step aside from that and concentrate on the subject of the motion which is diocesan funds. I come from that well-known rich diocese, Oxford, and I know that there are clergy and PCCs in our diocese who lie awake at night wondering how they are going to meet their Parish Share and, who having paid it, have no money left for anything else. I can hardly imagine how difficult it must be for those in poorer parts of the country. But I still have to ask: if the Oxford Diocese has spare money then how is this situation happening?

I really think that there just is not enough money to go around in the places it is being looked for. I would like to see generosity - if it is possible to be generous with other people's money - starting from the Church Commissioners. I would like to see regular support grants going from the Church Commissioners to support parishes in poorer areas rather than having to squeeze money out of dioceses where it is needed in their own parishes. I am going to vote against this motion, not because I do not want to be generous to poor parishes, far from it, but because I think we are looking for the money in the wrong place.

*Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln):* I am diocesan trustee, though speaking in a personal capacity. Chair, it is good to head some league tables: 30% of the nation's vegetables come from Lincolnshire. Where would our five-a-day be without it? Some tables are not so good. With 25% of the working population employed in the food industry, along with the levels of depravation in places such as Scunthorpe, Skegness, Grimsby and Cleethorpes, our average incomes are amongst the very lowest in the country. 197 of our 625 churches are in parishes with populations under 500.

We want a missional focus, but those buildings absorb much effort and funding limiting their communities' ability to pay Parish Share. Those churches, built through the generosity of our forebears, were also provided for by gifts of land, hence my diocese having the highest assets per person. But glebe income is low and improvement constrained by the combination of the Agricultural Holdings Act and charity law. Net of costs, the return on Lincoln's total assets in 2020 was only 1.5%. The consequences of all that has been an annual operating deficit of £3 million and more in recent years. Yes, we are asset rich but we are also cash poor.

The consequences of all that, Synod may be surprised that I will be supporting this motion for I can see a point in the future when we will be able to exercise inter-diocesan generosity. Under the Bishop of Grimsby's leadership and in the midst of all that my diocese has had to shoulder over the last 20 months, we have developed and are implementing measures that will transform things over the next five year. There is strong support from right across the diocese and early signs are encouraging. Like most other dioceses, I am pleased to say that Parish Share in my diocese collection is up in 2021 over 2020. We are making progress and I very much look forward to the day when we can exercise inter-diocesan generosity.

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker):* Although I did put in a request to speak, I was only going to speak if the Church Commissioners came up and it did come up a couple of speeches ago and so thank you for bearing with me.

In line with what longstanding members of Synod will recall, I am going to say "I am with Pete" on this particular issue. I support this motion entirely. I would want to draw out, as he said in his opening comment, that the Church Commissioners make significant sums of money available from Lowest Income Communities Funding. That is something that was agreed through the resourcing debates that took place a few years ago. That money is directed towards the poorest dioceses in the country who can then enable it to support ministry in the poorest parishes.

In a similar way with the SDF money - I am a member of the Strategic Investment Board, a Committee of the Archbishops' Council - we do try to ensure that that money goes as much as we can towards the poorer parts of the country. I am delighted that in one of the projects that we have in Rochdale in my diocese, one of the poorest parts of the country, the vicar of that new project is actually one of our new members of Synod here this afternoon. The Commissioners are giving money in that way. We have never given money directly to support parish income. We give through dioceses.

We could not possibly engage with 16,000 parishes each on their own merits. We are also very resistant to any methods of subsidy that are regressive, anything that does not steer itself towards what are the poorest areas. We are doing our bit to see that money goes to the poorest areas and I am grateful for the chance to make that point this afternoon.

*Revd Eleanor Robertshaw (Sheffield):* For those of you who were here yesterday, I am not going to speak about dogs. I wish to support this motion, not just because it is my diocesan Bishop who is bringing it but, working in a diocese that is one of the less well-

off, I know some of the pain of financial decisions that that have to be made at this time. But I also want to support it for another reason. This morning I was speaking to somebody in the Abbey - who I must point out does not work for the Church of England - who was very surprised to hear that there was actually a Diocese of Sheffield. Yes, we have been a diocese in our own right since 1914.

But my point is this. The C of E is one where we like to insist on doing things in 42 different ways and we often do not have an idea what priorities and difficulties are for other dioceses. If we were to have legislation to start sharing some of the historic wealth, I do think this would lead to us all having a better understanding of where we all are and, in extension, would enable us to work together as the whole Church of England. Please do support this motion.

*The Chair:* I now wish to test the mind of Synod on whether this item has been sufficiently debated. I do have to remind you that we have timed business at 5.30 which must be prompt. I, therefore, put the motion for closure on Item 5.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That is clearly carried and so I call upon the Bishop of Sheffield to respond to the debate. You have up to five minutes.

*The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox):* Thank you very much, Synod, for a most constructive and positive debate. Thank you, Andrew Orange and Prudence Dailey, for your cautionary notes. Andrew, you are absolutely right, we cannot afford any erosion of trust within dioceses. Prudence, I can absolutely reassure you that no grab is being made on parish assets. My point was rather that, if parish assets have been growing in the last decade, those must play into the comprehensive solution. We need wealthier individuals to be more generous. We need wealthier parishes to be more generous. We need wealthier dioceses to be more generous so that we can resource the whole mission of God across the whole land of the country. The art here is going to be to get a set of about six extremely self-willed ducks into something that approaches a row.

I think that is what Julie Dziegiel was asking us to seek in trying to get to simplicity out of considerable complexity. Thank you, Pete Spiers and Bishop Rachel, both of you, for your reminder that money generally follows vision. Bishop Rachel, in particular, for exciting our imaginations with the giving away of kitchen equipment and ingredients in order to furnish Kingdom banquets in every community across the land where people can encounter Jesus. And Arwen for reminding us that we absolutely must put our house in order this afternoon ahead of the much wider debate that will follow tomorrow. Thank you, Nigel, for reminding us that there are, in fact, systemic inequalities here which will mean that there will never be a level playing field across the Church of England. Land values vary so much from diocese to diocese, but assets will constantly be pulling away in value across different dioceses. Thank you for that reminder.

Bishop David, thank you for reminding us about the significant investment in more deprived communities through Lowest Income Communities Funding. Eleanor, how fitting that the last speech was a Sheffield one, thank you. Andy Salmon, finally to say to

you, unfortunately I cannot commit to the Mutuality in Finances Subgroup taking this work forward because our group's work was concluded with bringing this work to this Synod and the Mutuality in Finances Group, in effect, no longer exists.

Together, we are going to have to find a way of exerting pressure on the Vision and Strategy Group or on the Archbishops' Council to find a mechanism to ensure that this conversation becomes a five year conversation and this small first step this afternoon does not become a last step, because I absolutely welcome your insistence that we need to be more radical and more bold going forward. The beauty, however, of the motion before you this afternoon is that you are voting to see something come back to a future session of the Synod and so we will at least have one more chance to insist that further progress beyond this small step is taken.

Finally, on behalf of the Mutuality in Finances Subgroup, I want to say that we earnestly believe that it will be necessary for us to work together to find a solution because no part of our Church has all the answers to this question any more than it has all the resources. Thank you.

*The Chair:* We now come to the vote, which will be by show of hands, and just to reinforce the point that this is a direction of travel opening up next steps, we are not voting definitively on a whole set of decisions here. I put Item 5 to the vote.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That is clearly carried. Thank you for that, Synod. That concludes this item of business. We will be moving then directly on to Item 6, which is Questions. There will not be a break - we just move straight on to it and thereby possibly get through a few more questions than we might have got through otherwise. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *Very Revd Andrew Nunn (Dean of Southwark)* took the Chair at 5.19 pm.

## **ITEM 6 QUESTIONS**

*The Chair:* Synod, we now move to Item 6, Questions. I need to remind you that you have had the full set of questions and the answers Notice Paper by e-mail, and you might wish to refer to that during this item.

Just a couple of corrections, please, to note if you have a hard copy. Two mistakes were made, unfortunately: one on question 113. In the answer, in the final sentence, it says, "We trust that our responses to Questions 018..." And then it should say, "...036 and 112 adequately address your concerns".

And in question 130, in the answer, the second sentence of that, "However, as explained by the Church Buildings Council in the answer to question..." That should read, "...102, it is considered..." et cetera.

So those are two important corrections just to note.

I am just going to explain, Jamie, just before we begin, how this kind of works. You will see that there is an answer printed to each of the questions, and then there is the possibility of asking supplementary questions. The person who is answering a block of questions or an individual question or whatever will come to the lectern here. If you are asking a supplementary and I choose you to ask your supplementary, what you need to do is just simply shout out "Supplementary!" and then, if I ask you to ask that supplementary question, you go to one of the lecterns in order to do that. Any member can ask one supplementary question in respect of each original question, but no more than two supplementary questions can be asked altogether unless I decide otherwise. In calling members to ask supplementary questions, I must give priority to the member who asked the original question, so if you have asked the original question and you want to ask a supplementary, then I must ask you to do that.

Just some obvious things just to remind you. A supplementary question must be a question, so it has to have a question mark at the end of it, and I will be listening out for the question mark approaching.

A supplementary question must be strictly relevant to the original question or to the answer given, so it cannot be about anything else that you might have wanted to ask a question about, and it must not contain argument or imputation. In other words, a question must not be used as a debating point and it must not accuse a person of wrongdoing, brothers and sisters. A question must not ask for an expression of opinion, including on a question of law, or for the solution of a hypothetical problem.

If you want to find out more, you can turn to Standing Orders at Standing Order 113 and get even more than I have told you about. But anyway, I hope that all makes sense.

So we move on now to the questions themselves. As you will have seen, there were 132 questions asked, so we will try to get through as many as we possibly can. Questions 1 to 23 are to the Archbishops' Council, and questions 1 to 3 are to be answered by Dr Jamie Harrison on behalf of the Archbishops' Council.

## **ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL**

1. *Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What steps are the Church Commissioners taking to ensure that 100% of the Lowest Income Communities Funding received by Diocesan Boards of Finance is being passed on to their most deprived parishes and what are the consequences for those DBFs who are still not using LICF as intended?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The intention of the funding is to support mission and ministry in areas with the lowest incomes, where there is not the capacity for mutual support from elsewhere in the diocese.

Every diocese is asked to provide information on which parishes are supported by the funding. This additional level of focus on poorest communities from 2017 is a significant change to how national funding is administered. Therefore, there is a ten-year transition period, allowing for dioceses to move resources without causing high levels of disruption.

Each year, the level of accountability increases, and each year, dioceses are increasing the focus on deprived communities, as agreed for this ten-year transition.

*Revd Paul Benfield:* In answer to a question on this subject from me in July 2019, Canon John Spence said: "This funding is committed for 2017-19 and its effective use will be reviewed during preparations for the 2020-2022 budgeting period". Was that review undertaken and, if so, can the findings be published?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Thank you, Paul. This is to do with the Lowest Income Funding. In that triennium, as you say, funds were given out. As far as I am concerned, there was a significant review undertaken in relation to whether that funding was going in the right direction, as we have already heard from the Bishop of Manchester, where it should be going. I am not aware whether that is being published, but I will find out for you.

*Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool):* Whenever there was a peer review, the Lowest Income Communities Funding was always the subject of that. For the last few years, the peer review scheme has been on hold or has not happened. Can you tell us whether there are plans to resurrect the peer review scheme so that things like Lowest Income Communities Funding could be talked about there?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Thanks, Pete. We once did a rather exciting peer review together. The answer is no, I do not know. It is one of those things that has gone, I think, with the pandemic issue - we could not visit dioceses. Most dioceses, I think, had had two peer reviews, and the question then was "Does it continue in that format or do we change that format?" Again, I think that is under review.

2. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Following the recent announcement that the first investment from the Church of England's Social Impact Investment Programme is to be £1.6 million for the Women in Safe Homes fund, what criteria are being used to decide which other funds or projects should benefit from the Programme? Are Synod members encouraged to nominate any projects that appear to be good candidates due to the way and/or scale in which they are tackling social or environmental challenges?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Projects and funds to receive investment from the Social Impact Investment Programme are evaluated by the Archbishops' Council Investment Committee against the extent to which they meet both the impact and financial goals set out in the programme's Investment Strategy. In summary, the programme seeks investments which will have an impact in areas aligned with our mission, addressing housing need, strengthening communities, providing access to fair and affordable finance and protecting the environment. These investments require a risk adjusted financial

return which preserves the real value of the capital invested. The majority of the investments will be in funds or similar structures which provide diversification of risk. The programme maintains a pipeline of potential investments and Synod members may nominate investments for consideration.

3. *Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: On the basis of the most recent and appropriate quantitative data available, what is the average income level for the population of each diocese? Please provide the answer in the form of a table.

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: A table has been placed on the notice board showing for 2016/17 by diocese:

- Average gross incomes for taxpayers
- The proportion of those aged 16 or over who were taxpayers
- The estimated gross income per capita.

This data has been used in the diocesan apportionment calculation. But as in recent years the percentage change in apportionment has been the same for all dioceses, staff time has not been allocated to update the data.

	2017/18(HMRC website) Average taxpayer Incomes £	16+ Tax Paying Population	Estimated income per capita of 16+ population £
Bath & Wells	30,935	61%	21,218
Birmingham	29,332	50%	17,180
Blackburn	27,655	56%	17,705
Bristol	30,691	63%	20,981
Canterbury	30,927	57%	19,903
Carlisle	28,388	61%	19,263
Chelmsford	33,803	60%	21,899
Chester	33,400	62%	22,317
Chichester	34,558	61%	22,763
Coventry	32,779	59%	20,985
Derby	28,730	58%	19,028
Durham	26,671	54%	16,998
Ely	34,866	62%	23,245
Exeter	27,876	58%	18,324
Gloucester	33,198	63%	22,843
Guildford	48,727	68%	34,027
Hereford	30,063	59%	19,857
Leeds	28,944	56%	18,508
Leicester	30,042	56%	19,123
Lichfield	27,963	55%	17,822
Lincoln	27,552	56%	18,169
Liverpool	28,297	54%	17,402
London	53,809	58%	32,117
Manchester	27,865	52%	17,008
Newcastle	29,602	54%	18,517
Norwich	27,912	57%	18,542
Oxford	40,778	67%	28,289
Peterborough	31,306	63%	21,536
Portsmouth	31,488	58%	20,168
Rochester	38,071	63%	25,293
St. Albans	39,071	64%	26,394
St. Eds & Ips.	31,986	60%	21,257
Salisbury	32,043	63%	21,938
Sheffield	27,144	52%	16,761
Sodor & Man	39,520	63%	24,294
Southwark	44,787	61%	28,302
Southwell	28,246	54%	18,102
Truro	26,399	55%	17,185
Winchester	33,837	61%	22,669
Worcester	30,082	58%	19,580
York	28,594	56%	18,411

Data for Europe not available on a like for like basis

Taxpayer income and number of taxpayers from HMRC data

Statistics are provided at unitary authority and district level and have been mapped onto dioceses

The figures relate to the population of each Diocese, and may not be representative of members of Church of England worshipping communities

*Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln):* Many thanks for the answer. What consideration - and this is relevant to the debate we have just had - has the Archbishops' Council given to the unequal effect on diocesan financial strength, and hence the number of stipendiary priests that can be afforded, arising from the disparity in average income levels, let alone the

inevitably wider variation in disposable income levels, and what effect that has had on stipendiary ministry and the provision of ministry to the communities of each diocese?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Thank you, Nigel. As we have heard from the previous debate, this is all, I think, part of the process we are going to go into. The figures we gave you are probably a little bit out of date - I think HMRC has not given us anything after 2019 - and because of pressures on staff we have not continued to look at those costs. What is clear, though, is that the Lowest Income Funding does aim to those 25 dioceses that get it. We are spending or sending down something like £26.5 million to dioceses from the LInC funding, with another £8 million in transitional funding. So I think it is a complex web of things coming together. I think that is a really important point which I do think will come into the conversation we have just had with Bishop Pete and will come to the Council.

4. *Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In view of the financial pressures facing many Dioceses, has there been a recent review of the cost-effective use of vicarages during interregnums?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: This has not been the subject of a national review. Diocesan teams are responsible for working with parishes on letting arrangements in vacancy, and many dioceses have enhanced the efficiency of their letting practice in recent years.

It is common practice for the vicarages to be let during an interregnum and for any necessary building works to be completed during that period. Letting is a popular practice because it is better for the property to have tenants, for security for example, and because the rental income can be used to fund building works and for other purposes.

The review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure, being led by the Church Commissioners, has been exploring the abolition of sequestration, which would make it easier to let vicarages during vacancies.

*Dr Simon Eyre:* Could a national review be considered at this stage to try to generate greater uniformity of practice across the dioceses?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Thank you. I have been thinking about this. We have an issue about "How do we share information between dioceses about good practice?" One of the ways that we could do this, and I am going to make this as a concrete suggestion, is to work through the regional groupings, where we can ask a region to do some comparison with the four, five or six dioceses, and then to gather that together through the regional conveners who do meet regularly. So I think that might be a way forward for this.

5. *Ven. Mark Ireland (Blackburn)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: When *From Anecdote to Evidence* was published, emphasis was given to the need for spending decisions on church growth initiatives to be based on solid evidence. Given the considerable investment by the Church Commissioners over recent years in establishing

Resource Churches, what robust research has been commissioned, or studied, on the effectiveness of these new Resource Churches in making new disciples?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* All significant investment by the Archbishops' Council comes with a robust evaluation framework. Some of the Resource Churches have received funding from Strategic Development Funding, and these projects have a clear measurement framework, with agreed outcomes, an ongoing monitoring and evaluation process, and an independent final evaluation. This work is overseen by the Council's Strategic Investment Board. Whilst the Strategic Investment Board is a subcommittee of the Council, its membership includes both Church Commissioners and independent members to ensure total objectivity. Resource churches are relatively new in the Church of England and so there isn't yet a large sample which have reached maturity to be evaluated as a cohort. Early findings from these evaluations show that Resource Churches are effective in making new disciples, including reaching de- and un-churched people, younger generations, promoting spiritual growth, volunteering in social action, developing vocations, and starting new congregations.

*Ven. Mark Ireland:* Since the Church of England has a lot riding on this particular investment decision, would it perhaps be prudent to commission some robust research so that we could evidence how effectively Resource Churches are actually making new disciples rather than a transfer of growth and how cost effective they are compared with other models of evangelism?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Thank you, Mark. You know I am a medic, and one of the things in medicine is you do a survey or you do a trial and you see what it does.

We have a number of areas of evidence. For instance, some years ago in East London there was the *Love, Sweat and Tears* Report looking at church planting and similar things in East London. The *Anecdote to Evidence* Report clearly laid out certain characteristics and criteria for how churches might grow in relation to leadership, a focus on youth as well as other age groups, intentionality in growing evangelism, as well as social engagement. I think those are the sort of criteria we are looking at.

As the answer says, some of these Resource Churches are really quite new and young, and actually - and I should apologise to Paul Benfield - there is a review currently going on, led by Sir Robert Chote, an external review of both the Strategic Development Fund offers which include Resource Churches as well as the LInC funding. So I think yes, you are right, it needs robust reflection, I think that is going on, and the Strategic Development Unit does take a very close interest in how things are developing on the ground.

6. *Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Scripture charges us to remember and calls us to action for the bereaved: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5.4). As we emerge from a pandemic into a cost of living crisis, now more than ever funeral poverty and the cruelty of existing arrangements for paupers' funerals are prescient. Since my PMM on paupers' funerals was passed by General Synod when we last met in person in February 2020 (appreciating we have had a global pandemic), what work has been achieved or is

planned to tackle and help the poor with funeral costs, in particular raising the issue with Her Majesty's Government?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* As the question hints, the circumstances of the pandemic, including the redeployment of NCI staff to deal with the implications of that crisis, have made it difficult to follow up on this motion and, indeed, to raise it as an issue with Government as their attention has also been on the pandemic. Recognising that the pandemic is likely to exacerbate the problem, and wanting to see real change and not just to make a gesture, we will be following up this issue as part of our wider engagement with the Government, at many levels, on their "Levelling Up" agenda. Two significant problems we face are that (a) the motion called for financial assistance, the source of which is not readily apparent, and (b) national coordination of matters devolved to Local Authorities is notoriously tricky.

*Mr Sam Margrave:* The purpose of the question was not to debate the motion. This Synod had already made the decision to move forward. When will the Presidents of the Council, or Bishops, be raising this matter in the other place and be writing to Government on behalf of this Synod to convey our decision in relation to ending and seeking to end paupers' funerals?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Thank you, Sam, and thanks for your Private Member's Motion which was so helpful. I fear I cannot actually answer on behalf of the Presidents or the House of Bishops on this one, but I think I can answer for all of us that this is a responsibility we might all take. As you know, politically, we have now got a Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - DLUHC. You all have MPs, as I do. We all have ways of influencing local government. This is something we have to push forward together with. The Bishops will do what they can in the House; we have also got our responsibility, so this is a really important area. Whether you call them pauper funerals or contract funerals, this is an area we all have responsibility for, and I hope with your help we can move that forward.

*The Chair:* Questions 7 and 8 are going to be taken together.

7. *Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull (St Albans)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: How much funding has the National Safeguarding Team received in the years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively?

8. *Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull (St Albans)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: How many people were employed as part of the National Safeguarding Team in the years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 respectively?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* The table below shows the expansion of the National Safeguarding Team across 2016-2020.

This rapid expansion has been driven by the need to respond urgently to various developments and very regrettable disclosures. It is recognised that there will be a need to review both resource and structures as the situation stabilises.

<b>Safeguarding activity</b>	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<b>2016-2020</b>	actual	actual	actual	actual	actual
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Gross Expenditure	1,086	1,413	1,583	2,198	2,354
Staff Employed <i>December each year</i>	7 (6.2 FTE)	9 (8.4 FTE)	11 (8.9 FTE)	15 (12.1 FTE)	20 (17.2 FTE)

Clearly the cost of this expansion has been met by the Church of England and the Council is grateful to the Corporation of the Church House and the Church Commissioners for all their support in this. The Council has also used some of its own reserves to help fund these costs, which has resulted in only 8% of the cost of safeguarding at national level in 2016-2020 being funded from the diocesan apportionment.

*Revd Canon Dr Tim Bull:* Given both the vital importance of good safeguarding and also the rapidly increasing cost and staffing, does the Archbishops' Council have projections for future resourcing of the National Safeguarding Team and would they publish those projections?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* The simple answer is that I do not quite know where we are with that. We are going into a new triennium funding process. The triennium is the three years that we seek funding particularly through our friends from the Church Commissioners. This current triennium is 2020-2022. The next triennium is 2023-2025. There are some issues we know about, for instance, like the Interim Support Scheme, which we may be coming on to in a moment. That has got funding implications which we are looking at and are conscious of, among the other things that may come along. But I think at the moment you will see the trajectory of the funding having almost gone from a base of half a person in the Church of England not that long ago to the level we have got now is the direction of travel, but I do not know and perhaps we should not be too prescriptive about the future direction at this stage. Thank you for the question.

9. *Mrs Jane Rosam (Rochester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What are the terms of reference of (i) the Interim Redress Scheme (including the eligibility criteria for receiving payments) and (ii) the Redress Scheme Project Board?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The Terms of Reference ("ToR") of (i) the Interim Support Scheme (ie. not the "Interim Redress Scheme") demonstrate that the Scheme is intended to give immediate help and support to survivors of Church-related abuse and the Church's

response to it, whose life circumstances have been significantly affected by the abuse suffered. The Scheme is designed to address immediate and urgent needs to help in the short-term to put the survivor's life back on track. It is not intended to provide compensation or restitution, nor is it a redress scheme. These ToR, which include eligibility criteria, are published on the Church of England website. The ToR of (ii) the Redress Scheme Project Board have been drafted and are currently being agreed by members of the Board. They are expected to be signed off at the next meeting of the Project Board.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* Since the time for questions elapsed there has been a newspaper story calling into question the competencies of the Survivor Interim Support Scheme. I know much of the background and am fully sympathetic to the Church's invidious dilemma: it cannot explain and defend itself fully without risking causing potential harm to vulnerable people. Are you able to reassure members of this Synod, however, that Archbishops' Council will act swiftly to restore trust and confidence in one of the great survivor-centred initiatives of recent years?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Thanks, Martin. Trust, as you know, is about behaving well and faithfully over time, so in one sense we are having to build from a lower base than we would like.

I think I would say two things. First of all, if you go to the website you will see our terms of reference for the Interim Support Scheme, which is for urgent and immediate need for survivors and victims of Church-related abuse. There is a real commitment in those terms of reference. And also you will find the guidance note. That guidance note is around the tenth iteration of that guidance. There has been a pilot scheme running for a year, so we are learning all the time. I think that must be a sign of building trust. We are learning from where we have been and we are trying to do it better all the time. The second thing is, like any organisation, we will make mistakes and we have to learn from those.

I think your question about timeliness is really important. If things go wrong, we need to follow them up very quickly and as openly as we can, but, you are quite right, we have to hold certain confidences confidentially, and you are absolutely right in what you said about that. Thank you for your support recently in your blog.

10. *Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: As the employing, contracting and/or funding body, will the Archbishops' Council publish the full terms of reference and responsibilities of the Lead and Assistant Lead Bishops for Safeguarding, the National Director of Safeguarding, the National Safeguarding Team, the National Safeguarding Steering Group, the National Safeguarding Panel and the Independent Safeguarding Board; and will the Archbishops' Council indicate which of these bodies has the authority to intervene in cases where a diocese is not managing safeguarding cases appropriately, effectively, safely and in line with the House of Bishops' practice guidance?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The terms of reference for the National Safeguarding Panel and

National Safeguarding Steering Group are published on the Church of England's website (<https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/governance>).

The Independent Safeguarding Board is currently finalising its terms of reference and these will be published in due course.

The Key Roles and Responsibilities practice guidance outlines the role of the Lead Safeguarding Bishop and the National Safeguarding Team (<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-10/roles-and-responsibilities-practice-guidance.pdf>). It is not NCI practice to publish the role descriptions of individual staff. Diocesan Bishops, the Lead Safeguarding Bishop, the National Safeguarding Team and diocesan safeguarding advisory panels all play important roles to ensure that there are effective safeguarding arrangements in each diocese and that the House of Bishops' guidance is followed.

*Mr Gavin Drake:* Thank you for the answer to the question, but the question referred to "authority to intervene" and that has been translated as "playing an important role". Would it be correct to say that none of the national safeguarding functions of the Church of England have any legal authority to intervene if a bishop or diocese is not managing safeguarding cases appropriately, effectively, safely and in line with House of Bishops' guidance?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham):* I think, Gavin, you are asking me for a legal opinion which I am not competent to answer, but I would like to respond to your helpful question.

We are in a position of having a number of bodies which you can see. Do please go to the website and look up the various references you have asked for in relation to governance in the Church, the National Safeguarding Steering Group and so on.

The other thing I would say is that we are dealing, when you talk about dioceses, with 42 dioceses, each of them a charity under the Charity Commission, each of them responsible to the Charity Commission. If you go to the Charity Commission website, I think there are 12 principles of charity governance, good governance, and three of those relate to safeguarding. So I think there are different levels in which we as a national Church can respond, as you have seen in the answer, but also we all have as trustees, whether PCC trustees, diocesan synod or DBS trustees, or Archbishops' Council trustees, a responsibility. One of my legal colleagues will have to give you the answer to that question.

11. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The Church Times (<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2021/9-july/news/uk/interim-support-scheme-has-caused-more-anxietyabuse-survivors-report>) reported that, in response to complaints by survivors about the Interim Support Scheme for victims of abuse, the Secretary General of the Archbishops' Council admitted In April 2021 that "the lack of published criteria makes applications difficult". What has been done to make the criteria for interim support more public and transparent?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* The Interim Support scheme was set up a year ago in response to a very concerning urgent need of a survivor and continues to support survivors in need. The terms of reference have been developed over the last year with the latest version being agreed on the 28th September by the Archbishops' Council. The ToR and guidance notes are currently being made available to new applicants to the scheme and are now published on the Church of England website which will provide clarity on the parameters of the Scheme for all parties concerned. As with all processes, the operation of the scheme will be kept under continual review.

*Revd Dr Patrick Richmond:* Thank you. I do support this, and well done for making progress. Matthew Scott, a barrister whose blog alerted me to the problems that were being encountered, says that the newly-published terms of reference and guidance are confused and confusing, for example attempting to separate conflicts of interest from conflicts of loyalty but then defining one in terms of the other. Would you be willing to get someone to look at this to try to help the process?

*Canon Dr Jamie Harrison:* Yes. Thank you, Patrick. I think, as I said earlier, this is a pilot scheme in the process of reflection, development and education. If that is an issue that you have identified, it has been heard by the team, and the answer is yes, we will look at it.

12. *Miss Venessa Pinto (Leicester) asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* The UK Minority Ethnic mental health toolkit that was prepared for the Mission and Public Affairs (MPA) Council of the Archbishops' Council by MPA staff (with the purpose of raising awareness and to provide information for Church leaders, Church workers and Chaplains to assist them in gaining a better understanding of issues relevant to UK Minority Ethnic mental health) highlights a key recommendation stating the following: "a coherent strategy for developing UKME mental health services is needed, not simply more detailed planning of services. The Church of England should champion this initiative". Could you please update Synod if this is currently being championed in the C of E and what the progress is?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell) replied as President of the Archbishops' Council:* Through MPA and the Bishop of Carlisle (the Lead Bishop for health and social care in the House of Lords), the Church of England has championed the need for the Government to develop a coherent national strategy for developing UKME mental health services. In particular, we have highlighted this in discussions on the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Mandate and have held meetings with government ministers as well as the former Chief Executive of NHS England. A meeting is planned to discuss this and other issues with the current NHS England Chief Executive.

*Miss Venessa Pinto:* Thank you for the answer to the question. When will the meeting with the current NHS England Chief Executive take place to discuss the Government's need to develop a robust national strategy for developing mental health services for UK minority ethnic communities?

*The Archbishop of York:* Venessa, I do not know the answer to that question. As my answer indicates, the Bishop of Carlisle, who is the Lead Bishop, and the work of MPA are involved in this and a meeting is being planned. I do not know whether the Bishop of Carlisle may be able to privately outside give you more information, but I do not have that information. What I do know is this is being acted on.

13. *Professor Roy Faulkner (Leicester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What are the numbers respectively of usual Sunday attendance, parochial clergy, diocesan posts, archdeacons, and suffragan and diocesan bishops over the last 100 years, say in 1920, 1950, 1980, 2010 and today?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)* replied as President of the Archbishops' Council: The requested information, where available, can be found in the spreadsheet posted on the notice board. All figures are taken from publications available on the Church of England web page: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/research-and-statistics>.

These publications also contain methodological information and further detail. For most of the information requested, figures have not been collected consistently, if collected at all, over the last 100 years; as much information as possible has been provided. No information is held centrally about the number of staff employed by each diocese, so in this case the requested information is not readily available and could not be obtained without disproportionate cost – if indeed it were even possible to obtain this information.

Category	1959*	1979*	2000*	2010*	2020**
Parochial clergy <sup>1</sup>	13,075	10,662	8,744	7,324	7,210
Archdeacons	106	104	106	109	129
Suffragan bishops <sup>2</sup>	70	72	67	58	67
Diocesan bishops <sup>3</sup>	43	43	41	39	39
Stipendiary posts <sup>4</sup>	-	-	9,675	8,501	7,670
Self supporting clergy <sup>5</sup>	-	-	2,083	3,151	2,880
Readers/licensed lay ministers	6,452	6,575	-	6,856	4,590
Readers/licensed lay ministers including those retired with PTO	-	6,811	10,308	10,056	7,590

Data refer to full-time roles within diocesan framework only (i.e. excludes non-parochial roles such as chaplains in HM Armed Forces, prisons, secular charitable organisations, religious communities, theological colleges, etc)

\*\* Data refer to stipendiary roles only (with the exception of self supporting and licensed readers categories)

<sup>1</sup> For 1959, this includes Dignitaries with parochial cures of souls; Incumbents; Ministers-in charge of Conventional Districts; Assistant Clergymen

For 1979 onwards, this includes Incumbents (excluding dignitaries); Incumbent Status; Assistant Curates

<sup>2</sup> For 1959 to 2000, this includes Suffragan and Assistant Bishops  
For 2010 onwards, this includes Suffragan bishops only

<sup>3</sup> For 1959, this includes Archbishops and Diocesan Bishops  
For 1979, this includes Diocesan Bishops only

<sup>4</sup> For 2000, this includes full time stipendiary parochial clergy only  
For 2010 onwards, this includes all stipendiary clergy

<sup>5</sup> This includes Non Stipendiary Ministers (NSMs) and Ordained Local Ministers (OLMs)

PTO = Permission to Officiate

	1970	1980	1990	2000*	2010	2019
Usual Sunday attendance	1,541,821	1,239,800	1,142,900	947,700	799,361	679,800

\*No figure was published for 2000; the figure shown is the average of the 1999 and 2001 figures  
For consistency, all figures exclude the Diocese in Europe.

*Professor Roy Faulkner:* Thank you for your information about this. In view of the fact that the figures show that the biggest change in posts in dioceses throughout the country has reduced dramatically for stipendiary priests and clergy, can you reassure me that the priority in the operation of the dioceses must in the future be to restore the number of stipendiary priests above everything else?

*The Archbishop of York:* Well, I am afraid I cannot give a reassurance for each diocese for all the reasons we know - that each diocese operates independently. But, in a way, I think our debate earlier on Mutuality in Finance is a very clear indication. And by the way, that group started off as a subgroup of the Vision and Strategy Group because we realised that we have to join all this up. I think that debate was a clear indication that we want to do all that we can to fund the cure of souls in every parish so that we can serve every community, but we should not underestimate the big financial challenges in doing that. But I am afraid, no, I cannot speak for every diocese.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham):* Do you have a view on the main reason for the fact that the number of senior posts per stipendiary clergy and parishes has effectively doubled over that time and do you think that is sustainable and justifiable given the significant drop in church attendance?

*The Archbishop of York:* Well, I do not think I am supposed to offer an opinion, but I am very happy to give it if the Chair allows me.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul:* "Explanation" is perhaps a better word.

*The Archbishop of York:* So I think what we must do is look at what I referred to earlier as the whole ecosystem of the Church to decide what we need and what we can afford in order to serve the Church in the frontline. Therefore, I do not think anybody or any post which is painful and difficult for all of us should not be looked at. I do not pretend to have the answer to that, but I think we should all, whoever we are, in an undefended way, be asking ourselves, "What is best for the living and proclamation of the Gospel in this land? What sort of a church and what sort of shape should we be in order to best do that?"

14. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Over 75 years after the publication of *Towards the Conversion of England*, will the Archbishops' Council now treat the re-evangelisation of England as the overriding priority in the formation of its agendas and the allocation of its financial and human resources?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)* replied as President of the Archbishops' Council: The conversion of England remains our priority and is expressed through our vision and strategy flowing from our life in Christ. There is much effort presently ensuring our financial and human resources are aligned to this. The original 1945 report highlighted three key things which are central to our present work. Firstly that evangelism is the work of the whole church, not just a few. Hence our call to be a Church of missionary disciples. Secondly, "the need for finding new means whereby a hearing may be gained for the Gospel message". We need to find new ways of living and sharing the gospel in a younger and more diverse church. Moreover, the final words of the report bring us back to the Vision of a Christ centred church, "The only spiritual dynamic is the Living Spirit of the Crucified and Risen Christ himself... the dynamic for such a compelling witness is, in the good purpose of God, always available."

*Mr Clive Scowen:* I am very grateful to Archbishop Stephen for drawing attention to the three aspects of *Towards the Conversion of England* which are reflected in Vision and Strategy - that is brilliant. The problem with *Towards the Conversion of England* was that it was never implemented because other important issues were allowed to take precedence: canonical reform, liturgical reform, ordination of women and so on. How will the Archbishops' Council ensure that that same fate does not befall Vision and Strategy?

*The Archbishop of York:* First of all, I am hugely grateful for the question and for the opportunity to make those connections between what was such a significant but, as you say, unimplemented document and the work that we are trying to do today. I hope I have said enough this afternoon to indicate my personal commitment to doing all that we can to make sure that in our work as a Synod, whilst doing the other necessary business

which you make such a contribution to, Clive, in terms of our legislative life, we will begin to ask these hard questions about how we best live and proclaim the Gospel for our land, and I hope that we will give priority to that, not just in Synod but also in our dioceses and in our parishes. I hope that will be one of the features of this quinquennium.

15. *Revd Canon Barnabas de Berry (Canterbury)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In February 2020 we were presented by the Evangelism and Discipleship team in GS2161, the stark reality of the decline in numbers of young people attending our churches. Is it possible at this stage to know how the pandemic and the effects of lockdown has further affected those numbers? And what does this mean now for the urgency that the report demanded of us then in our evangelism to children and young people?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: GS 2161 was a data analysis of the Statistics for Mission figures from 2014-2018. Since then, while we have the 2019 data, this obviously doesn't show the impact of the pandemic. With the October count having just taken place, hopefully the 2021 data will help us to see where we now stand as a Church, but this data will not be available until summer 2022.

There has been very limited research on the impact of the pandemic on Youth and Children's ministry. The available research looks at specific snapshots within the pandemic and multiple lockdowns. Early estimates suggest that the pandemic has seen a reduction in young people's in-person attendance to 20-30% of pre-pandemic levels. However, this is an estimate and the 2021 SfM figures will offer more concrete data.

Additionally, we have just commissioned a piece of research into churches that have statistically grown in their attendance of under-16s, looking for factors common to growth. Inevitably some of this research will reflect some of the impact of the pandemic of children's and youth ministry.

16. *Mr Carl Hughes (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: With reference to the response, on behalf of the Presidents, by the Bishop of Durham at the July 2021 Group of Sessions to Question 22 raised by Dr Paul Buckingham concerning guidance in relation to the constitutional options for Diocesan Boards of Education under the DBE Measure 2021, particularly with respect to DBEs being unincorporated associations, whilst the amendment supported by the then Dean of the Arches and myself to the Measure during its passage through Synod failed due to lack of members attending the relevant debate, very clear statements were made that it was expected that those DBE's that remain unincorporated associations are moving away from this inappropriate constitutional form for large charities, and that it was expected that no such structures would remain across the dioceses with 'a few years'.

The response from the Bishop of Durham in July states: "General guidance highlighting the benefits and risks of incorporated and unincorporated DBEs has been provided, with clear guidance being given that if the unincorporated structure is selected legal advice must be taken to mitigate the inherent risks. However, it is not considered that s.18 Guidance is appropriate here as, if it was to provide that one structure was the most

appropriate, or was not generally considered appropriate, a diocese would need to have cogent reasons not to select or to select structure for its DBE. This could be seen as undermining the choices available in law given to dioceses by the 2021 Measure.”

Could the Presidents advise how many DBEs remain constituted as unincorporated associations and confirm whether the statements made during the passage of the Measure that unincorporated associations are not a best-practice constitutional form for DBE’s in terms of contemporary charitable governance remains the Church’s view, and, if so, whether it is intended that the strongest encouragement and guidance will be provided to dioceses to ensure that any DBEs which remain unincorporated associations should have a clear plan to moving to a more acceptable form of constitutional governance within the next three years?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:* The Education Office (CEEEO) is aware that 18 dioceses expect to have brought a scheme to their diocesan synod for approval before the end of December to implement the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 2021. Of these 18 dioceses, nine currently have incorporated DBEs and will continue to have incorporated DBEs and nine currently have unincorporated DBEs and have selected the Statutory Committee of the DBF option – none have chosen to remain unincorporated. A further six dioceses with unincorporated DBEs have indicated to the CEEEO that they intend to select the Statutory Committee of the DBF option. The remaining unincorporated dioceses have not yet indicated to the CEEEO which option they will select. However, as no diocese with an unincorporated DBE has yet chosen to remain unincorporated, it appears the CEEEO’s guidance is sufficiently clear and is alerting the dioceses to the significant risks of continuing with an unincorporated structure.

*Mr Carl Hughes:* I would like to thank in this case the Bishop of Durham for the clarity of his answer and also the Education Office for the guidance that they have published on making a new scheme for Diocesan Boards of Education. However, whilst the guidance is clear concerning the risks of DBEs having a constitutional form of an unincorporated association, the guidance stops short of discouraging this form of governance which many consider to be inappropriate for large charities in the 2020s. May I therefore ask if the Archbishops’ Council, and indeed the Education Office, would specifically discourage the continuation of the use of incorporated associations for DBEs on the grounds of good governance?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* So you will appreciate that I am channelling Paul Butler. One response is, first of all, the Measure is in the form it is, and what I have been told is that there will be consideration given to what you are suggesting, but I think what is going on at the moment is that they are waiting to see how all the dioceses are going to respond. So I am sorry to be less clear than I would like to be, but I am trying to interpret what I have been told.

*Mr Clive Scowen (London):* Does the Bishop know whether in fact any dioceses have as yet opted for the unincorporated option?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I know for certain that none has.

17. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What cost-benefit analysis has been or is being carried out to underpin the development of the Church of England's strategy, and will quantified estimates of the effects of proposals (including an enumeration of the factors taken into account at arriving at these figures) be made available?

*Mrs Maureen Cole (ex officio)* replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The development of the Vision and Strategy has used a wide range of skill sets, utilising expertise in theology, missiology, strategy, data analysis, finances, and leadership development, among other skill sets. This has helped develop the Vision and Strategy's three strategic priorities and six bold outcomes.

Cost benefit analysis is one tool which can help with this, but there are no simple ways to value either the costs of change, or the benefits of having a simpler, humbler and bolder Church. There are no simple equations for inputs guaranteeing outputs in developing missionary discipleship.

As the delivery of the Vision and Strategy rests with dioceses and churches, the evaluation of costs and benefits of making any changes aligned to the Vision and Strategy also needs to be locally led. The work and insight from this in local contexts will help build up national learning over time.

*Miss Prudence Dailey:* Is the Archbishops' Council aware that there is a large body of research on the subject of donor engagement, and has it made quantified projections of the likely effects on giving and church attendance of any of its proposals?

*Mrs Maureen Cole:* Prudence, I did not predict that question as a supplementary. It is my first time standing up to answer questions. I will ask the team behind me to follow that up for you.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* The Gospel of Luke says, "Don't begin until you count the cost", asking, "For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?" Therefore, has theological consideration been given as to whether it is appropriate for General Synod to decide nationally the vision and strategy of the Church of England without first counting the cost?

*Mrs Maureen Cole:* I think we are. The other thing for me is that it is not just about one building, there is something also about taking risk and looking and discerning where the Spirit is moving. In some cases, we cannot always count the cost, we have to see what comes in the future.

18. *Revd Sam Maginnis (Chelmsford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The Council states at para. 13 of its 2022 Financial Update (GS 2235) that it is "encouraged" by the younger age profile of those attending BAPs compared to the previous year. In line with the Church of England's vision for a younger and more diverse church, how is the Council working to ensure that sufficient full-time stipendiary posts will

be available for younger ordinands - including many from low-income backgrounds - who are offering their whole working lives to ministry in the church?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf on the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* We continue to be thankful for the growth in the number and diversity of ordinands and sustaining that growth must be a priority for the Church in order to realise our Vision and Strategy. The Strategic Ministry Board since 2020 has been providing funding to ensure those completing initial formation can have a title post, and at its October meeting the Board approved funding to support a further 20 additional stipendiary curacies (on top of the 90 already agreed) for the cohort to be ordained in 2022. This gives us confidence that there will be sufficient title posts to allow all eligible finishing curates to serve their curacy in a stipendiary post.

*Revd Sam Maginnis:* I am grateful for the Bishop's answer. However, I am concerned that it only talks of new stipendiary curacies for next year. If the Archbishops' Council is truly thankful for the growth in the number and diversity of ordinands, what steps is it taking to ensure that younger ordinands who are dedicating the majority of their working lives to the service of God's people are supported with stipendiary posts through 30 or 40 years of fruitful ministry and service?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Let me give a couple of responses to that. My first response is how do we learn to respond when God answers prayer? When we think about this extraordinary upsurge in the number of people offering for ordained ministry when we were given the target of a 50% increase and we virtually met that, there is something there that God is telling us and, therefore, how do we respond to that? In the spirit of that, we are working hard to look at how we sustain the sort of engagement that we have been able to do through the Strategic Ministry Board into the future. But that is subject, at the moment, to the discussions going on in the Triennium Funding Working Group, which is the body that looks at how the Commissioners' contributions will be distributed over the next triennium, which is 2023 forwards. My commitment is to do my best to ensure that and I think that commitment is shared by a number of others.

*Revd Canon Andrew Cornes (Chichester):* Your answers are great news, but we still hear of dioceses cutting back on curacies. In my Diocese of Chichester, we have gone from offering 12 stipendiary title posts in 2019 to six in 2020. Is this sort of experience in our and other dioceses because of redistribution between dioceses or because of insufficient finance?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* You are asking me for a guess there which I do not think I am able to give, but to say that certainly in the conversations we have had with dioceses where we have been working from a baseline figure, for instance, the principal factor in deciding that they are unable to meet the baseline or not to seek further posts, and indeed to cut, seems to be the financial element in that.

19. *Mr John Brydon (Norwich)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: With the reduction in stipendiary front line clergy now a reality and with more proposed, has or will consideration be given to a pro rata reduction in senior appointments across the Church of England, along with an embargo on all appointments to new clerical or

administrative positions (i.e. where the appointment is not to fill an existing vacancy), pending a complete review of financing the church's activities?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf on the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* 2020 was the first year in over 20 years where the number of stipendiary clergy grew slightly rather than remaining stable or declining. All dioceses are clearly facing financial uncertainties, exacerbated by the pandemic. Some have shared their current expectations of a need to reduce the number of stipendiary clergy posts. But we have to ensure that short term changes do not undermine our long term aims. Crucially, we need to continue to prepare, deploy and support clergy in stipendiary roles to contribute to the Church's Vision and Strategy. The Strategic Ministry Fund was established in 2020 to support this intention. We are also seeing some dioceses reduce diocesan posts in order to support stipendiary clergy posts, the Simpler NCI's process will reduce central costs and there is a review underway into the future pattern of episcopal ministry.

*Mr John Brydon:* Whilst I am grateful to the Bishop for his response and for his assurance that there is some reduction in central posts underway, might he now please address my specific query concerning whether consideration has been given to reductions in the number of senior staff and an embargo on all new clerical and administrative positions pending a full financial review?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* You are asking me to make a statement in relation to all dioceses and it is up to every diocese how they respond to that, but I think dioceses are taking that point under consideration.

20. *Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: To what extent has the pandemic and, more recently, the rise in energy prices, affected the Parish Buying Energy Basket Scheme from the viewpoint of (a) the scheme's operation and (b) parishes using the scheme?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied on behalf on the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:* The Parish Buying Energy Basket has continued to operate normally throughout the pandemic, but with staff working from home rather than in a central office.

The extraordinary rises in prices has provoked the closure of 20 energy companies and the sad loss of jobs for many people. Energy that is used in the Energy Basket in 2021/22 was bought before the current turmoil in the energy market. We estimate this forward purchasing strategy has reduced the cost of energy to parishes for the year ahead by at least £2 million, and potentially as much as £5 million, compared to the prices currently being charged by other suppliers.

Due to the current difficulties in the energy market, churches and cathedrals may currently only enter the energy basket on 1st October each year, but they are being offered fixed-term contracts for energy through Parish Buying until then.

21. *Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In light of the governance review and the increasing financial and demographic pressure on our Parish Churches what steps are being taken to ensure the rights of PCCs and the local church are strengthened and not undermined?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf on the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: One of the bold outcomes of the Vision and Strategy work is 'a parish system revitalised for mission so churches can reach and serve everyone in their community.' The Governance Review Group Report's recommendations are intended to make the governance of the National Church Institutions simpler and clearer, and more accountable to dioceses and parishes. These proposals will in due course be brought to General Synod for debate. The intention in all of this is better to support the local church to fulfil the mission to which they are called.

*Mr Luke Appleton:* Are there mechanisms in place to measure governance and organisational changes and what impact they have on the local church with special attention to the impact on rural churches?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* There are not specifically, but as part of the work we are doing under *Transforming Effectiveness*, which is looking at what will enable the local church to operate better and what would assist the local church, then those sorts of considerations are coming up. As the Bishop of a rural diocese, I am committed to ensuring that we address the challenges faced in rural dioceses.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* The answer given refers to the "parish". What is the Archbishops' Council's working definition of the "parish" referred to in the answer given?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I will have to ask the rest of the Archbishops' Council. Certainly, in all the documents that I have written and I have noticed we have responded because the "parish church" is the phrase used in the question. In all the answers in other documents I have used terms like "local church" or "local Christian community" because we are concerned to look at parishes. We are looking at benefices. We are looking at chaplaincies. We are looking at a variety of different entities which fall under the rubric of "local church".

22. *Mr Clive Billenness (Europe)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Since the Archbishop of Canterbury in April 2021 expressed his complete opposition to the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements or Confidentiality Clauses where payments are made to individuals by Church of England bodies in the resolution of litigation, and then jointly with the Archbishop of York issued guidance to this effect to Bishops, can this Synod now be assured that such restrictions are no longer being imposed in any financial settlements within the Church of England?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf on the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The National Church acknowledges and understands the genuine concerns in this area and has liaised with external professional bodies such as ACAS on the use of settlement agreements. The NCIs are reviewing their policy in this area to ensure that in the limited and appropriate circumstances where agreements might be used to resolve disputes any use of confidentiality provisions are

subject to careful analysis of the merits in each individual case and take into account the potential impact on the individual concerned, including the provision of legal and pastoral support. Any ensuing guidance will be shared more widely in order to encourage a consistent approach. Dioceses and other church bodies are independent legal entities and the national church does not control the use of such agreements by those bodies.

*Mr Clive Billenness:* Bishop, I am grateful for the commitment to try to achieve a consistent approach to the use of confidentiality provisions and I recognise the complications with church bodies all being separate legal bodies. However, under the Charity Commission's guidance on the preparation of annual accounts, known as FRS 102, there is a provision to include in the additional notes to the accounts any information which might assist stakeholders in their understanding of how money is being spent. Can, therefore, the Council consider issuing instruction to all Church institutions to include in their additional notes to their accounts the total amount of money paid out in the financial year where confidentiality clauses formed part of the settlement? While declaring a total would not disclose any sensitive personal information or individual cases, it would serve as an overall indicator of the extent to which such clauses were being used by different institutions.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I will pass that on and ask for its consideration.

23. *Mr Andrew Orange (Winchester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Can the Council consider whether there might be a new, national programme led by our archbishops, designed to offer focused monthly core thoughts, and supported by both publicity and optional material for use in parishes – with the aim of communicating, promoting and underscoring essential Christian values (or the meaning of festivals at times when they occur) and thereby to make a monthly occasion when in-church worship could be made more relevant and attractive to those who do not attend regularly at the moment?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf on the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Thank you for this suggestion of how we can encourage parishes to communicate the Christian message with their local communities. In fact, much of this is already being done through the Digital Team's work for various festivals, especially Christmas and Lent and the monthly online services. Plus there are many special Sunday services ideas, resources and publicity that are regularly produced by local churches, networks, charities and the National Church, and some bishops are using online opportunities to share and teach the Christian faith. Both Archbishops are regularly involved in many of these resources. It is really important that parishes consider how they could use these resources to enhance worship and teaching for those who do not attend regularly.

*Mr Andrew Orange:* I asked if there could be a new national programme led from the top designed to focus on core monthly thoughts. What a wonderful thing it would be if we could instigate something for all those people who are sympathetic with the Christian messages but not completely engaging with them. What a wonderful thing it would be if the leadership could engage media in a focused programme month by month. Bishop, you answered my question very nicely, pointing out very correctly that there are plenty of

resources, but I would just like to re-ask the question what about a focused national programme with a singular message each month? I do not expect you to answer it now.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I was going to ask my brothers to the right what they thought of this.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* It is set from the top. It is you.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I think they are passing the buck. I will pursue that.

*Mr Andrew Orange:* Thank you.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* They will be very happy to consider it.

## **HOUSE OF BISHOPS**

24. *Revd Dr Sean Doherty (Universities & TElS)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the light of the Archbishop of Canterbury's recent statement on the 'draft anti-LGBTQ+ Bill to be debated by the Ghanaian parliament,' with its welcome restatement of the opposition of the Primates of the Anglican Communion to the criminalisation of LGBT people, will the House of Bishops be considering what action they might take in response to the support of the Anglican Church of Ghana for the Bill?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: In a conversation I had with the Archbishop, bishops and senior clergy of the Anglican Church of Ghana on 3rd November, we affirmed that the 1998 Lambeth conference Resolution I.10. represents the last and most widely accepted statement on the question of human sexuality.

We agreed that all human beings are made in God's image and are worthy of love, respect and dignity, and that the Church of Jesus Christ is called to demonstrate the love of God by protecting all vulnerable people and communities.

The Anglican Communion is a global family of churches who are autonomous but interdependent. One of the key conclusions of our meeting was that cultural context, history and human dignity all matter greatly, and must be held together in Christ.

*Revd Dr Sean Doherty:* It is very welcome to hear the reassurance that the Anglican Church in Ghana does not condone the criminalisation of LGBT+ people. In the light, your Grace, of what you said about private discussions earlier it may not be possible to answer this, but are you able to confirm whether the Anglican Church of Ghana is, therefore, withdrawing its apparent support for the draft bill?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* I really do not want to say any more than I have already said.

*Revd Dr Sean Doherty:* Okay, thank you.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* But thank you very much for putting the point.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* In relation to actions that could be taken, was withdrawing Ghana's invite to Lambeth considered as a possible action that the Archbishop could have taken?

*The Chair:* I am sorry, that is not a question, I am told, that can be asked of the Archbishop.

*Revd Preb. Dr Amatu Christian-Iwuagwu (London):* What actions is the Church of England prepared to take or make in response to any unintentional consequences as a result of statements, though made with good intentions, that will affect other Christians in other parts of Africa?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* Chair, I am not entirely sure I understand the question. Could the questioner be given the opportunity to clarify it, please.

*The Chair:* Of course. Would you be able to clarify your question for the Archbishop, please.

*Revd Preb. Dr Amatu Christian-Iwuagwu:* Yes, when we make statements here as part of the Church of England and we respond in various ways, there are other Christians in other parts of the world who will face the brunt of the decisions we make here. For instance, there may be other religions who might start attacking innocent Christians in other parts of the world as a result.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* Thank you, that is most kind of you. We do consider that. It is probably, for me, one of the major issues I consider before making a statement and I look very carefully in all circumstances - this is not to do with Ghana - when making statements of this kind, about what the potential impact could be on Christians in countries in many, many places in the world where they find themselves in very, very difficult positions, particularly countries where there is persecution and it is a very significant part of my own thinking.

25. *Mr Philip Baldwin (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Please could the House of Bishops update the Synod on what conversations have been had with the Anglican Church in Ghana on the Ghanaian Family Values 2021 Bill?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby)* replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: I met online with the Anglican Archbishop and several bishops and senior clergy from Ghana on 3rd November. We affirmed that the 1998 Lambeth conference Resolution I.10. represents the last and most widely accepted statement on the question of human sexuality.

We agreed that all human beings are made in God's image and are worthy of love, respect and dignity, and that the Church of Jesus Christ is called to demonstrate the love of God by protecting all vulnerable people and communities.

I encourage good, courteous, clear and robust future conversations with the Anglican Church of Ghana on this matter.

*Mr Philip Baldwin:* The answer refers to the cultural context in Ghana. As homosexuality was criminalised in Ghana in the 1860s when Ghana was a British colony under the Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, which was implemented in all British colonies, and this homophobia is entirely a cultural legacy of the British Empire, does the Church of England with its unique position as the established Church for centuries not shoulder a crucial responsibility in ensuring that the Family Values Bill is not passed?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* I really cannot add anything to what I said earlier during the debate on the Business Committee Report. That is the full range of what I want to say.

*Professor Helen King (Oxford):* The Family Values Bill does not only affect the LGBT people but also inter-sex people. Will the House of Bishops consider the proposed legislation's effect on those born with variations in sex characteristics who under clause 23 would be subject to non-consensual genital surgery?

*The Archbishop of Canterbury:* I do not believe the House of Bishops has any jurisdiction over the Church in Ghana.

26. *Revd Sam Maginnis (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The report of the CCM Implementation Group (GS Misc 1304) fails to mention the Following Motion brought by the Revd Simon Talbott during the July 2021 Synod debate which "identified a number of areas where further work is needed" on clergy discipline reform. That Following Motion, which was carried by a majority of 238-32, expressed Synod's concerns for any complaints process that fails to distinguish between misconduct justifying prohibition from ministry and loss of home and livelihood, and other instances of misconduct.

Can we now be reassured that the Implementation Group will seek to uphold the clear will of Synod expressed in Mr Talbott's Following Motion, specifically with regard to an initial assessment stage which distinguishes between (i) complaints not involving misconduct (ii) misconduct that is less than serious, and (iii) serious misconduct, with only serious misconduct being subject to investigation by a national agency and a formal tribunal process?

*The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge)* replied on behalf of Chair of the House of Bishops: As GS Misc 1304 sets out, the Implementation Group have identified a number of key areas for discussion including "The creation of a 'track' system that distinguishes between different levels of seriousness, including considering whether there should be a distinction between different types of misconduct". The Implementation Group

has begun considering this issue and will continue to keep Synod informed as the work progresses.

27. *Mrs Amanda Robbie (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: It would appear that the CDM Code of Practice paragraph 163 is now being used more widely by bishops writing 'letters of admonition and advice' which are then placed on a respondent's blue file. What national guidance has been given to bishops about

- i. when it is appropriate to send such a letter; and
- ii. given that the letter will be attached to the blue file, what due process is there to follow to protect a respondent's right to a fair process when there has been no fact-finding investigation so as to ensure due process and also to avoid a post code lottery?

*The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge)* replied on behalf of Chair of the House of Bishops:

- i. The Code of Practice, formulated by the Clergy Discipline Commission and approved by General Synod, is issued to provide uniform guidance on the operation of the CDM. Paragraph 163 of the Code provides that a bishop may advise or warn a respondent where the bishop is satisfied that misconduct has taken place, but has decided to take no further action. No other national guidance has been issued.
- ii. In following due process, the circumstances where a bishop may take no further action are set out in paragraph 162 of the Code. These include where the misconduct is admitted but is of a technical or minor nature or, having seen the respondent's answer, the bishop considers there may have been misconduct, but it is only of a technical or minor nature and would not merit any sanction under the Measure being imposed taking into account any mitigating factors.

*Mrs Amanda Robbie:* Due process is more than following procedure under a Code of Practice. All other sanctions in relation to misconduct in the Church of England have a right of appeal. However, this procedure of letter of admonishment that puts the admonition or warning on a clergyperson's blue file has no such right of appeal. Will the House of Bishops address this lack of natural justice and due process?

*The Bishop of Worcester:* Thank you for the question. That is certainly something that the House of Bishops could consider, but I think it is very difficult to legislate on what a bishop may say to his or her clergy and what can be recorded. It is very difficult to legislate for that. There will be all sorts of letters which will go on file but to make specific rules for anything that can be put on there I think will be very difficult. That is a personal opinion, I am sorry, Chair.

*Revd Jeremy Moodey (Oxford):* When it comes to letters of advice and warning under paragraph 163 of the CDM Code of Practice, will clear guidance be given to bishops and published on what constitutes misconduct of a technical or minor nature?

*The Bishop of Worcester:* Thank you for the question. Well, certainly the group that I am chairing is one in which we are looking at the whole area of misconduct and the various tiers into which it might fall, and that has been discussed at Synod already. We are looking at that more carefully and certainly we shall want to give some guidance, but if

we are dealing with a CDM or a replacement CDM we have to be very careful about seeking to legislate for things which do not actually fall into that, but I take your point.

28. *Mrs Amanda Robbie (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the very few CDM cases that each diocesan registrar deals with and the huge annual cost of these reports how can we be assured that they are both properly trained and sufficiently experienced to advise bishops at the Preliminary Scrutiny Stage so that we get good outcomes for all concerned and value for money?

*The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge)* replied on behalf of Chair of the House of Bishops: Registrars are bishops' legal advisers and their training is not nationally controlled. Like all qualified lawyers, registrars are required to make sure that their knowledge and skills are up to date and that they are competent to practice. Diocesan registrars are members of the Ecclesiastical Law Association which offers general updates and training. To improve accountability the Fees Advisory Commission requires diocesan bishops to conduct annual reviews of the provision of legal services with their registrar. Moreover, registrars' fees in connection with the provision of preliminary scrutiny reports are subject to clear limits, and invoices in connection with preliminary scrutiny are subject to scrutiny by the Church Commissioners prior to payment to ensure that the costs incurred are reasonable and proportionate.

*Mrs Amanda Robbie:* Does the House of Bishops issue guidance for the content of annual reviews of the provision of legal services with registrars?

*The Bishop of Worcester:* The House of Bishops does not. There is an obligation on every diocese to conduct a review with diocesan registrars but the results of those are not published, no.

29. *Revd Canon Simon Talbott (Ely)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: During the debate on CDM reform at the July 2021 session of Synod I brought a Following Motion, carried by a majority of 238-32, that expressed Synod's clear desire to avoid any further lengthy delay in developing and implementing proposals for legislative reform. Can the CCM Implementation Group now guarantee that it will honour this desire and bring detailed legislative proposals to Synod for consideration at the July 2022 session as envisaged in GS Misc 1304?

*The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge)* replied on behalf of Chair of the House of Bishops: As set out in GS Misc 1304, the Implementation Group intends to consult with interested bodies in the early part of 2022 and thereafter to hold a panel discussion event for members of Synod in February 2022. The intention remains to present detailed legislative proposals to Synod in July 2022.

*Revd Canon Simon Talbott:* Thank you, Bishop, for your response and good to see the notes from the first meeting of the Implementation Group. I would like to know how the voice of those brothers and sisters who have been severely affected by the CDM process might be heard within the Implementation Group?

*The Bishop of Worcester:* Simon, can I thank you for your advocacy on this and we are very conscious of the following motion that you proposed. I want to assure Synod that we are wanting to move as fast as we possibly can whilst at the same time making sure that we do the job thoroughly and get it right. Now, as you will be aware, a lot of work was done by the prior group which had the representatives of survivors on it. There was a consultation of survivors. In order to make the work of the Implementation Group expeditious, we have decided to keep the membership really small but we will be engaged in a wide consultation once we have come up with the proposals which we think are worthy of consideration.

30. *Revd Claire Robson (Newcastle)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The CCM Implementation Group states in GS Misc 1304 that it intends to consult with “interested bodies” on its proposals for clergy discipline reform before the February 2022 session of Synod. Will the Implementation Group consult with survivors of abuse and survivors of the CDM as part of this process?

*The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge)* replied on behalf of Chair of the House of Bishops: The work of the Implementation Group builds upon the detailed work previously undertaken by the Lambeth Working Group on the CDM which through written submissions, meetings, and a public consultation heard from survivors of abuse and complainants and respondents who had been through the disciplinary process. The Implementation Group will certainly continue to consult with the groups identified in the question as its proposals are developed.

31. *Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops To whom are the bishops in the Church of England accountable when payments are made from Diocesan funds to people signing Non-Disclosure Agreements?

*The Bishop of Hereford (Rt Revd Richard Jackson)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Where payments are made from diocesan funds arising from settlement agreements the instruction to use to such agreements and any oversight ultimately lies with the relevant trustees who are required to comply with the same regulatory and reporting requirements as other charities. We expect that diocesan officers and trustees will take appropriate advice from their professional advisers

*Revd Canon Lisa Battye:* Thank you for explaining that those creating non-disclosure agreements and facilitating financial settlements are ultimately accountable to their dioceses and trustees. My supplementary is to ask to which ecclesiastical authority those trustees are accountable?

*The Bishop of Hereford:* Well, of course, they are not accountable. Each diocese is independent and, therefore, makes its own decisions and so there is no further accountability beyond the diocesan board of finance, effectively, to itself.

32. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What is the research evidence showing the impact on church growth of grouping parishes into Mission and Ministry Areas or the equivalent, and how many dioceses are currently using or planning to use such schemes?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* Research has been undertaken for the Archbishops' Council on Team Ministries (which pre-date but share some similarities with Mission and Ministry Areas) in strand 3C of the Church Growth Research Programme, and follow up reports 'Stronger as One?' and 'Growing Deeper'. These are available on the Church of England website.

The conclusion of these reports was that while clergy numbers have a significant effect on the likelihood of attendance growth and decline, there is no statistically significant relationship between the number of churches in a benefice and numerical growth or decline when controlling for clergy numbers and other effects.

We conclude that culture, leadership, collaboration, missionary discipleship, and intentionality are more significant factors on growth than the structure of benefices. "Mission and Ministry Areas or the equivalent" could cover a wide range of both structural and informal arrangements, hence equating this to a specific number of dioceses is not practicable.

33. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What progress has been made with the implementation of the National Estates Ministry Strategy, which was approved by General Synod in February 2019? And what steps will be taken to ensure that the Strategy is embedded and delivered throughout the term of the new Synod?

*The Bishop of Burnley (Rt Revd Philip North) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* On a national level, the Estates Evangelism Task Group continues to work towards achieving Synod's goal of a worshipping, loving, serving Christian community on every significant estate in the nation. It is currently reworking its strategy around the goals of the national Vision and Strategy and continues to operate through partnerships, conferences, communications and direct support for some dioceses. However it is the dioceses themselves who carry the key responsibility for implementing Synod's motion and so it is important that every diocese develops a strategy for their urban estates, that LICF grants are directed towards the most deprived communities and that, in those dioceses where re-organisations are planned, the impact on estates and low income communities areas is carefully monitored lest it be disproportionate.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood:* I thought I was getting the Bishop of Burnley, but anyway.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* You were, but this is a piece of cardboard. The Bishop of Burnley, my dear brother, has Covid. He has asked me to reply. I shall try to reply with the same winsome enthusiasm, but will probably fail.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood:* I am sure you will not. Archbishop Stephen, would you please pass on to Bishop Philip our thanks for all his leadership in the area of ministry and mission on social housing estates.

*The Archbishop of York:* I will.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood:* Given the answer that the frontline responsibility lies with each diocese but also given the fresh resolve from the NCIs to serve and equip the local church, may I ask both of yourself and for Bishop Philip, what can the NCIs do and what can this Synod do over the next five years to support Bishop Philip in his leadership role and the dioceses as they turn this strategy into reality?

*The Archbishop of York:* Adrian, thank you very much for the question. Thank you very much for the supplementary. Chair, you will have to shut me up in a moment because there is a lot I would love to say on this. First of all, we have already discovered that, actually, clergy numbers in the Church of England went up last year. We do need to be careful about some of the stories that we hear and what their truth actually is. They went up in 2020 slightly. Some dioceses are finding themselves having to cut clergy numbers. Others are not. We have an aspiration to grow 10,000 new worshipping communities, which some people have scoffed at. The Bishop of Burnley has not. The Bishop of Burnley is getting on with it with a big vision to plant a church on every estate.

We looked in the Mutuality And Finance Report at the league table of diocesan assets and I think we all noticed that only one diocese in the Province of York appeared on the first page of the top 20. In the parts of the country where I am privileged to serve, there are large estates where we have been unable to create a Christian worshipping witnessing presence. The work of the Estates Evangelism Task Force mandated by this Synod is one of the most exciting things we are doing to actually turn the words on a page of our vision and strategy about wanting to reach out to our nation into actual reality.

I hope in the Triennium Funding Working Group and in other places we will begin to see our resources and our resource allocation aligned with this Synod motion which aligns itself with the vision and strategy. I look forward, now I am in the north, to working very closely with the Bishop of Burnley on making this happen.

34. *Mr Stephen Hofmeyr (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Now that it has been made clear that the Church of England Chaplain to the Iranian/Persian community in England, Revd Bassi Mirzania, who was appointed to this role by the Archbishops, will not be replaced following her retirement, could you please state (1) who has ministered specifically to this community in the last 2 years and (2) what form this ministry has taken?

*The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Guli Francis-Dehqani)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The generous ministry of the Revd Bassi Mirzania has undoubtedly aided and encouraged the integration of Persian ministry into the parochial life of the C of E. The numbers of baptisms, confirmations, ordinations and the growth in the number of lay vocations are testament to that. I was personally heartened by the honour Bassi received recently in a Lambeth award. There is now discipleship and liturgical material widely available in Persian, including an authorised version of the Common Worship Eucharist. There is also a network of clergy across the country who share resources, experience and expertise with one another.

The Archbishops' Adviser on Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns has met with various networks of Persian/Iranian heritage clergy and lay leaders in the last 6 months, since her

appointment, and is currently exploring ways to develop a coherent strategy within the resources available, strategizing how these ministries could be better supported.

*Mr Stephen Hofmeyr:* Many thanks for the answer and for the work that has been done and is being done amongst the more than 5,000 to whom the Revd Mirzania ministered. You refer in your answer to the resources available. Could you please tell Synod what are the resources available and on how many occasions has Dr Pereira met with networks of Persian/Iranian heritage clergy and lay leaders?

*The Bishop of Chelmsford:* The primary resource I am referring to is the authorized translation of Common Worship Eucharist into Persian, which is available on the website. There are also a whole series of formal and less formal discipleship resources that, as far as I am aware, are available primarily through word of mouth and the email network which I referred to in the answer as well that are being shared amongst those who are using and creating these resources.

35. *Mr Geoffrey Tattersall (Manchester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Recognising that clergy are office-holders and not employees and that the financial situation of many dioceses is likely to lead to a reduction in clergy numbers, what is the estimated number of clergy nationally who are likely to be affected and what principles will be applied by dioceses to ensure that they receive appropriate compensation?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: This is not a figure that can be easily estimated as diocesan teams do not report numbers to the NCIs. However, clergy office holders may only be removed from office in very limited circumstances, including; resignation, retirement or on reaching the age of 70. Clergy can be dispossessed of their office under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, but diocesan teams generally avoid this option unless it is absolutely necessary. Clergy who are dispossessed as a result of pastoral reorganisation are legally entitled to receive compensation in the form of 1 year's stipend, and a lump sum equating to 1 year's pension contributions as well as being entitled to housing for 1 year. New guidance on dispossession under the Measure has been approved and will be issued to dioceses in November.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* While no figures are provided by diocese, what are the working figures that are used by NCIs within forward planning?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* Sorry, figures about what?

*Mr Sam Margrave:* Am I allowed to respond?

*The Chair:* You can just clarify.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I need to understand the question.

*Mr Sam Margrave:* For clarity, if you look at the first three sentences in the original question it discusses "likely to lead to a reduction in clergy numbers" and I wondered what the NCI uses as an assumption figure for its business planning and forward planning.

Being as it gets no information from dioceses, it must have a figure that it uses to make decisions.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* I am not aware of that figure.

36. *Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: How many dioceses have announced plans to cut the number of stipendiary posts over the next five years, by how much, and by how many in total?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Members of the National Ministry Team have been undertaking the analysis of the future national requirements for clergy, including stipendiary clergy and, so far, this is indicating a range of outcomes. They are in regular contact with dioceses seeking to build a picture of the anticipated need. This process will be on-going, and a more comprehensive communication of our provisional analysis will be completed and made available in a few weeks' time.

Although locally some dioceses have shared their current expectations of a need to reduce the number of stipendiary clergy posts, there remains considerable uncertainty in the overall national picture. Dioceses are still assessing their immediate and longer-term financial circumstances. The scale and pattern of future clergy retirements is very difficult to predict through the unique context of the pandemic and the full implications of the ambitious Vision and Strategy have yet to be fully reflected in the plans of Dioceses. Meanwhile measures are already being developed and implemented to mitigate the risk of a short term mis-match between the continuing flow of stipendiary ordained vocations and the needs of the church. These include the extension of the already existing Strategic Ministry Fund to create additional curacy places.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul:* Thank you very much for your answer. Given the importance of this information, given that we know at least four dioceses are making significant cuts in stipendiary posts and given your own comment here and in answer to earlier questions that this represents a significant mismatch between diocesan policies and national strategy, I wonder if you could let us know when we might be able to have some sort of information just indicating the scale of the numbers and the scale of the challenge we are facing?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich:* We are sort of operating on two timetables, are we not. We have dioceses operating under the extraordinary pressure of immediate financial constraints having to make decisions about clergy numbers. We, meanwhile, have a national strategy for the Church of England which we have in the previous Synod warmly embraced and we continue to embrace, which is looking at a longer term view where those posts will be needed in one form or another.

What we have been trying to do is to gather together what data we can. It is a constantly moving picture, but we have got data together now and we are trying to bring some sort of interpretation to that. It is quite tricky to work out what the direction of travel is, but what I want to do and what I am hoping to be able to do is certainly to write by the end of this month with the outcome of the search for the investigation of data from dioceses. But

I hope that we can also, when I write, indicate that we are looking actively at some way to mitigate this, what I would consider, short-term challenge that we are in. We are actively engaged in that process. I am in conversations with John Spence, Alan Smith and Chris Goldsmith to see how we can provide some sort of mitigation as we, indeed, have been doing for the support of stipendiary curacies.

37. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that the Report, '*Setting God's People Free*' (SGPF), including its call for two important 'cultural shifts' within the Church of England (CoE), was overwhelmingly approved by General Synod in February 2017, given the endorsement by General Synod in July 2019 to 'embed' the culture change and given that culture change is usually said to take 7-10 years to bring about, what steps is the House of Bishops taking to ensure that all the recommendations of SGPF are taken forward into the strategic objectives of 'missionary disciples' and 'mixed ecology', indeed into the lifeblood of the CoE, throughout the life of the new Synod?

*The Bishop of Gloucester (Rt Revd Rachel Treweek)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Vision and Strategy continues the aspiration laid out in SGPF to be a church where "all God's people are set free and empowered and enabled to live the Christian life in and for the world" (GS 2223). Attending to necessary shifts in our culture remain vital in the implementation of this priority (see GS Misc 1302). The Bishop of Gloucester will continue to encourage conversation on this in her role as Episcopal Champion for SGPF whenever missionary disciples are spoken about in the House of Bishops.

Bishops have sponsored contextual implementation of the SGPF shifts in 29 dioceses through the Discipleship Learning Communities. This action/learning approach continues through a Disciple Enablers Network - with participants from all dioceses along with resource organisations and mission agencies. Engagement in this network offers both challenge and encouragement to bishops and their senior staff teams in identifying and persevering with this long-term culture change.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood:* Thank you, Bishop Rachel, for your answer and for all that you have done and are doing as the episcopal champion for *Setting God's People Free*. Thank you also to Nick Shepherd for producing GC Misc 1302. As you say, Bishop Rachel, the cultural changes sought by SGPF are essential to the lasting success of the vision and I for one will do all in my human power to ensure that *Setting God's People Free* does not go the way of other previous reports on the laity. Would you support the call for a formal debate on GS Misc 1302 at the February group of sessions so that *Setting God's People Free* can be fully adopted by this Synod and, if so, would you make that formal request to the Business Committee?

*The Bishop of Gloucester:* I think you are probably asking me for an opinion but, as you know, I am passionate about this and I know that that has already been in discussion and I will be giving that my support. Thank you for your tenacity in this whole area. Just to say thank you for your thanks. Someone has pointed out to me it is rather amusing that I am the episcopal champion for *Setting God's People Free* and now the Bishop for Prisons.

*The Chair.* I need the Bishop of Gloucester back, please. You are not set free yet.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* It looked like the Bishop for Prisons was making an early escape.

*The Bishop of Gloucester.* Exactly, yes.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler.* After the inspirational Presidential Address earlier, we were asked to buzz about what we needed to do. I said to Joyce, “To put our money where our mouth is”. My question is does the House have any idea of how much money has shifted towards the *Setting God’s People Free* agenda from other priorities?

*The Bishop of Gloucester.* I do not know the answer to that. I can try and find that out. What I would say is I think a lot of this is about join-up - my own reps will laugh at me using that technical word. I think one of the dangers is that we look at things in silos. We talk about where money has been shifted to different things rather than understanding how *Setting God’s People Free, Growing Faith*, all these different things are actually all part of this culture shift which is now reflected in missionary disciples. One other work I really hope this Synod will do will be to actually make those connections across so much of what we are doing so we are living one vision and not lots of different initiatives.

38. *Revd Christopher Blunt (Chester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Notwithstanding the answer given to Q55 at the July 2021 Session, could the House of Bishops permit wine at Holy Communion to be consecrated in a common vessel and distributed to communicants (incidentally) via individual vessels?

39. *Revd Andrew Atherstone (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that the use of individual cups at Holy Communion remains an open question in the Church of England – not previously settled by any canon or legal ruling – can parishes which choose to introduce individual cups as a temporary local provision anticipate the goodwill of the House of Bishops?

40. *Revd Joanna Stobart (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the difficulty of amending Canon law and the theological discussion that would rightly be required to do this, what pastoral response – beyond the existing guidelines and recognising the long-term nature of the situation we are in with Covid – would the House of Bishops like to offer to those of my colleagues whose congregations wish to receive in two kinds but are not ready for the common cup and do not want to use simultaneous intinction?

41. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The amended guidance (not instruction) issued by the House of Bishops on 1 September 2021 states, as regards the administration of Holy Communion, that “there are three possibilities for administration: 1) under the form of bread alone, mindful that the president must still receive in both kinds; 2) in both kinds in the customary manner with a shared cup or chalice used to administer the consecrated wine; 3) in both kinds by simultaneous administration. (The simultaneous administration of consecrated bread and wine is

effected by the president taking a piece of bread carefully from the paten or ciborium with the fingers and touching it briefly but carefully to the surface of the wine, allowing a small amount of the wine to suffuse into the bread.) Intinction should not be practised by individual communicants, and methods of administering the wine other than by means of a shared cup or simultaneous administration should not be employed”.

In view of previous advice received from the Legal Advisory Commission that possibilities 1) and 3) are illegal and/or contrary to the tradition of the Church of England on the ground that the first makes a difference between priest and other communicants, contrary to the tradition of the Church of England, and the third goes beyond the departure from the general custom of the Church of England said to be justified by the doctrine of necessity (See paragraphs 9(a) and 10-11 of the LAC’s advice dated January 1991, revised in September 2003), will the House of Bishops now take steps to resolve the current impasse by bringing together those with expertise in liturgy, law, doctrine, viral transmission, ecumenical relations and the laity in whom so much is vested for the future running of our churches and long for the spirit of ‘simpler, humbler, bolder’ to include distribution of the wine in smaller vessels, even if only ‘pro tem’, and view the ongoing high risk of Covid transmission from a single cup as unacceptably high (see current exclusion - possibility 2)?

*The Bishop of Lichfield (Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* With permission, I will answer questions 38, 39, 40, and 41 together.

The House recognises that different ministers and churches have in good conscience adopted a variety of forms of administration of Holy Communion while Covid-19 continues to circulate in the general population. Whatever approach is taken, ministers and churches should be guided by the symbolism and ideal of ‘one bread and one cup’.

With respect to individual cups, neither the House of Bishops nor any individual bishop may formally authorize a practice if it is not lawful, whether temporarily or permanently. At its October meeting the House agreed that it did not wish to propose the necessary legislative business to the General Synod which would make the use of individual cups indisputably lawful.

We do recognise that many churches have been discovering fresh insights into the meaning of Holy Communion, and we believe that there is much that we can and should learn from one another.

*Revd Andrew Atherstone:* I am very grateful for this answer, especially for its recognition that the legal question remains open and the benefits of local pastoral provision. Many parishes will be introducing individual cups during Advent in the lead-up to the Christmas celebrations. Given there will be no formal House of Bishops imprimatur, would diocesan bishops like to be kept informed of these local developments or should parishes just get on with it?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* Yes, thank you, Andrew. Well, I am sure that will be a question that each individual diocesan bishop would want to answer for themselves. I think it would be interesting to know what is happening. We clearly, as the House of Bishops and as

Bishops individually, are not interested in policing this in an inquisitorial or a punitive way. I would just want to emphasise again the importance of the one cup one bread which is central to our understanding.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham):* I wonder if it is possible for anyone in the House of Bishops to explain to me, a bear of little brain, why we are making such a fuss about individual cups when, for a long time, we have used individual wafers when individual wafers were never part of a single loaf and yet where the individual cups have actually been filled from a single vessel? Is there an explanation available anywhere?

*The Chair:* I am advised that this question contains argument, Ian, so I rule it out of order.

*Revd Dr Ian Paul:* I was simply asking if there was an explanation anywhere. Can that be supplied? I think many in this Synod would quite like one.

*The Chair:* I have ruled you out of order, so I am sorry about that.

*Revd Canon Mark Bennet (Oxford):* Can someone explain to me what research was done into the actual practices being adopted by parishes, including the distribution of Communion to those who are sick or clinically vulnerable, to inform the opinion that the Bishops have reached on this matter?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* We are aware that the practices in different parishes are very different. Infection rates in different parts of the country are very different and ministers in consultation with churches have responded in different ways and we have not been able to do a comprehensive research to find out what those patterns are.

*Revd Joanna Stobart:* I think this is different enough to ask it. Given from their answer that the House of Bishops clearly recognises that different churches and ministers have adopted a variety of approaches to the administration of Holy Communion, at what point will the House be prepared to bring the necessary legislative business before this newly constituted General Synod to allow this important question to be debated openly?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* The House of Bishops at our last meeting did consider the possibility of introducing legislation to this Synod to declare the legality of using individual cups and we came to the mind that that was not an appropriate thing to do at this stage given the amount of synodical time that it would take. If I can use Archbishop Stephen's rather resonant image from earlier in the afternoon, it would feel possibly to those watching from the outside rather like arguing about the colour of the combine harvester when there are more important issues to attend to.

*Revd Christopher Blunt:* Am I allowed to ask Ian's question to ask for an explanation for the difference between wafers and cups?

*The Chair:* Put it in a question and then I will decide whether you can ask it.

*Revd Christopher Blunt:* Please could the Bishop explain the theological difference between the use of individual wafers and individual cups?

*The Chair.* That, I am afraid, is an expression of opinion, so you cannot ask that one. Sorry about that. Supplementary, you have a go then.

*Revd Canon Paul Cartwright (Leeds):* Could we ask the House of Bishops maybe to release a theological paper about this, rather than having to debate it, so we understand that we are receiving the body and blood in one form?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* The House of Bishops has done quite a lot of theological reflection and work on this issue and if the House were minded to release a paper I would be very happy.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* Could the House of Bishops please explain, if we are moving away from legalities because an opinion from six barristers present in the House gave an alternative view and as the leader of the Business Committee said, “We trust the advice given to us by our lawyers”, but please trust also other lawyers in the ---

*The Chair:* Mary, we are having problems. Could you pull the microphone down towards you and then repeat your question.

*Mrs Mary Durlacher:* In the interests of consistency and accountability, please could the Bishops give a reason whereby the distribution of the wine is confined just to the President, as in today’s wonderful ceremony, despite the clear command of our Lord Jesus, “Drink ye all of this”. Please could the House of Bishops revise their guidance to everybody on this restriction to just the President. Let it be in obedience to the Lord’s command.

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* I think, if I may, the logic behind this is threefold. First of all, that bread and wine both need to be used in a celebration of Holy Communion and so the wine needs to be consecrated. Secondly, at the moment where minister and a church deem that necessity and, therefore, reasons of safety and health mean that people cannot share in the common cup, that clearly creates a case for not receiving the wine. Thirdly, the wine needs to be consumed at the end. The prayer book is very clear and our liturgy is very clear about reverent consumption. So those three things coming together, of necessity, of consumption and of the use of wine, mean that the wine has to be consumed. It is not particularly that it is by the President but it can be consumed by somebody.

42. *Revd Andrew Atherstone (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that there are contrasting legal opinions on individual cups at Holy Communion, by respectable groups of Church of England barristers, will the House of Bishops facilitate conversations between them to seek consensus?

*The Bishop of Lichfield (Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: As I reported in February, the Legal Advisory Commission has already considered the legal opinion solicited by Mrs Durlacher. The Commission exists to advise the General Synod and its Houses as well as senior officers of the Church of England;

the House of Bishops will neither instruct nor forbid the Commission to engage in dialogue beyond that stated remit.

*Revd Andrew Atherstone:* I am very keen to hear that emphasis to leave the combine harvester painting and move out into the harvest fields. Let me, nonetheless, ask a supplementary. Is the House of Bishops aware that 120 years ago, in April 1902, the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, Archbishop Temple, declared about individual cups at Holy Communion that there is nothing illegal in the proposal and that provision should be made either by the churchwardens or by the communicants who desire it. Given that this question is much more open historically than perhaps the LAC has more recently led us to believe, who should be facilitating the conversations if the House of Bishops do not want to facilitate them themselves?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* In answer to your first question, Andrew, I do not think the House of Bishops is aware of, I think, Archbishop Frederick Temple's view, but I am aware because you told me three hours ago, so that was very interesting and thank you for letting me know. In terms of facilitating, I think we are at a stage where parishes and ministers are experimenting a great deal with the celebration of Holy Communion and are learning a great deal about it and discovering new depths within it. I think that that conversation needs to continue to grow in depth and in density.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* I do not have any tractor analogies to give Synod. So those of us who are not lawyers understand the law, will the House of Bishops make available the aforementioned legal advice on the use of individual cups to members of this Synod so we can see the legal advice for ourselves?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* I refer to my answer to one of the questions. This is a decision for the Legal Advisory Commission as to whether to publish their advice or not.

43. *Miss Jane Patterson (Sheffield)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: At a recent ordination service, the service sheet stated that "During coronavirus we follow the pre-Reformation practice ... The President of the Eucharist alone receives from the cup, as a representative of all the faithful, everyone is welcome to receive the consecrated bread." In its Advice dated January 1991, revised September 2003, the LAC stated that a practice whereby a difference is made between priest and other communicants (such as was used at the ordination service) would be contrary to the tradition of the Church of England. Can the House of Bishops please confirm that it "cannot authorise or encourage [this] practice" on the ground that it would be contrary to the tradition of the Church of England?

*The Bishop of Lichfield (Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: There is long precedent, from the time of the Book of Common Prayer onwards, for communicants receiving Holy Communion in one kind by reason of medical necessity; this might include the president if they were (for instance) immunocompromised.

No theology of the consecration of the elements or their reception accepts that the benefits conveyed by the sacrament (spiritual or otherwise) are impeded by reception in one kind. There is, therefore, no 'inequality' of benefit from Communion between

president and communicants, though there may in some circumstances be a difference in their experience of participating in the action of eating and drinking.

The consecration of wine is an essential part of the service of Holy Communion. Where it is judged inadvisable for health reasons for communicants to receive from a common cup, and because any remainder not required for purposes of Communion must be consumed, the Eucharistic president does so alone.

*Miss Jane Patterson:* Bishop, thank you for your answer. Infection control measures excepted, given the withdrawal of a common cup was itself withdrawn in July 2021, please can you confirm, using the logic of your answer, that it is no longer permissible for the Eucharist President alone to receive wine from a common cup?

*The Chair:* I am afraid, Jane, that is an argument, and so I have to rule that out of order.

*Ven. Luke Miller (London):* Just to build on that point, given that the guidance has changed, is it possible to make steps to make the guidance known again and to point to the fact that it is up on the Church of England website in order that decisions made locally can be based on a clear understanding that it is currently possible under our guidance to share the common cup if it is felt locally that that is a helpful and appropriate thing to do, and that other decisions can be made on a theological basis in another place in another way?

*The Bishop of Lichfield:* The guidance is under constant revision and its publication is constantly being revised, so, yes, I am sure that right. In many places the common cup has been restored in churches.

*The Chair:* Questions 44 to 58 to be answered by the Bishop of London.

44. *Dr Simon Eyre (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: With the continuing antagonistic stance of some Christian groups to the vaccination programme against Covid-19, has the House of Bishops discussed this issue and formulated a response?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: While respecting that a decision to be vaccinated is one for individuals to make, the Church of England has been strongly supportive of the UK Covid-19 vaccination programme as well as equitable global distribution of vaccines through its participation in the [vaccinaid.org](https://www.vaccinaid.org) campaign with UNICEF. Over the past year, statements encouraging vaccination have been made by members of the House of Bishops. Similar guidance has also been posted on the Church of England's website, most recently on 3 November, where uptake of the booster vaccination programme is highlighted as an important part of countering an upsurge in hospitalisations and deaths from Covid-19 over the winter months.

*Dr Simon Eyre:* I am very grateful for the efforts made in Covid vaccination but have the theological arguments being used to promote non-vaccination been discussed and confronted?

*The Bishop of London:* With the Covid Response Group we have had a broad theological discussion around vaccination and non-vaccination, yes.

45. *Mr Jonathan Baird (Salisbury)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: When will a public inquiry be held into the decision to close churches at the beginning of lockdown?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Prime Minister has announced that he intends to launch an inquiry into the pandemic in the first half of 2022. We do not know yet if the Government's decision to close places of worship for public worship and individual prayer at the beginning of the lockdown will be a subject of the inquiry.

*Mr Jonathan Baird:* Hiding behind the Government does not answer the question. At the beginning of lockdown the Church hierarchy dropped the ball. Given that so many people felt abandoned by the Church, and terribly let down, is this not ---

*The Chair:* I am afraid your question is containing argument and imputation and that is not allowed in the Standing Orders.

*Mr Jonathan Baird:* May I therefore finish the question?

*The Chair:* No, it is out of order.

*Mrs Emma Joy Gregory (Bath & Wells):* Has the House of Bishops discussed under what circumstances it would or would not tolerate the mandatory closure of all churches when instructed to do so by the Government?

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you for your question. It obviously gives me an opportunity to thank everyone during a very difficult period over the last 18 months who has stepped out of the churches and into the community. I recognise the hurt that closing our churches caused. Of course, it was the Government who closed the churches, and not us.

In terms of looking forward, I think your point is a very good one. We have not had that formal discussion and I think it is something that we should do going forward in that way, but thank you.

46. *Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: including staff time, the cost of materials and promotional expenses how much has the LLF process cost to date?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The table below shows the cost of the Living in Love and Faith project from its commencement in January 2018 up to the end of September 2021.

The cost of producing the LLF resources is being met from a grant provided from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Charitable Fund.

To date, around 19% of the cost of Living in Love and Faith has been funded from the diocesan apportionment.

Cost:

Salaries of staff	341,000
Other project expenses	150,000 (meetings and events)
LLF Resources	190,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>681,000</b>

These have been funded by:

Archbishop's Charitable Fund	190,000
Church Commissioners	109,000
Archbishops' Council Reserves	255,000
Archbishops' Council (Vote 2)	127,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>681,000</b>

*Mr Luke Appleton:* I just want to start by thanking you, Bishop Sarah, for your thoughtful correspondence on the wider topic of LLF, and for your answer to my question. I just wanted to ask a supplementary question. Considering the large cost of the project and the potential for unclear outcomes, are there other key performance indicators to ensure that we get value for money, both at the end of the process but also throughout at key milestones?

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you for your question. I suspect that this is going to be a journey about the heart as well as the mind. I am not sure, despite my background and what people may think of me, that I put key performance indicators to the work of the Spirit. It is something about our journey. However, we are beginning to collect figures on those people who have been engaged in the material, and those people that responded to the survey, so we are collecting those data, and that will be available. For me this is, in a sense, a journey of the spirit as much as looking at key performance indicators.

*Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry):* Thank you, Chair. Has the House of Bishops considered comparably the expenditure on LLF compared with the expenditure on Shared Conversations and whether there is potential that it could be considered that this is a Poundshop shared conversation?

*The Bishop of London:* We have not considered the comparison, no.

47. *Canon Shayne Ardron (Leicester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: According to the document GS Misc 1306 on Living in Love and Faith, in Spring 2022 there will be an opportunity for diocesan synods to "reflect on engagement in dioceses so far and the role of Diocesan Synods in shaping the Church's discernment process. Resources and a process will be offered". When will these resources and details of the process become available?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Thank you for this opportunity to expand on this element of the work of the Next Steps Group. The opportunity for diocesan synods to engage with LLF in the spring of 2022 is very much an invitation rather than a requirement,

especially given the different pressures and priorities on dioceses at this time. Resources will be available at the beginning of December 2021. Their focus will be to encourage diocesan synods to reflect together in the spirit of the LLF journey of learning, listening, discerning about what it means to be human and to consider the role of diocesan synods in shaping the kind of church we want to be.

*The Chair:* Questions 48 and 49 are going to be taken together.

48. *Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Noting that the Next Steps Group has met 14 times since July 2020 (GS Misc 1306), how many times has the Next Steps Reference Group been convened or otherwise been enabled to “act as a sounding board for the group’s work in enabling church communities to participate in LLF in appropriately sensitive ways” (Question 67, November 2020)?

49. *Professor Helen King (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: How many times has the “diverse Reference Group” now met and how is it intended that it will be used by the Next Steps Group of Living in Love and Faith?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: With permission Chair, I will answer Mr Patterson and Professor King together.

Thank you for this question which appropriately calls the work of the Next Steps Group to account. The timetable for engagement with LLF was extended to 30 April 2022. This has shifted some of the tasks for which the members of the Reference Group will be used as a sounding board (it was not formed to meet, although if appropriate it can and will).

Also, many dioceses have put “reference groups” in place locally to ensure engagement with LLF is appropriate for diverse people and contexts. This is monitored through meetings of LLF advocates.

The Next Steps Group is now drawing on the Reference Group to help with the questions that will be used for the Focus Group element of ‘Listening to the whole church’. They will also be called upon when the feedback is gathered and shaped into the “findings” that will be made available in September 2022.

50. *Revd Robert Thompson (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: At the 1998 Lambeth Conference, the full report ([ps://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/document-library/lambeth-conference/1998/section-i-called-to-full-humanity/section-i10-human-sexuality](https://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/document-library/lambeth-conference/1998/section-i-called-to-full-humanity/section-i10-human-sexuality)) which led to Resolution 1.10 included these words: “We call upon the Church and all its members to work to end any discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and to oppose homophobia.”

What progress has the Church of England made since 1998 towards ending discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Thank you for reminding the Church of this important

task. It seems to me that there has been considerable growth since 1998 in understanding what constitutes discrimination in relation to sexual orientation.

A vital part of the work of Living in Love and Faith is to shine a light on areas where discrimination still exists and to talk more honestly, openly and graciously about these matters. The Pastoral Principles play an important role in continuing to challenge the Church to be shaped by them as the Church seeks to clarify the legitimate boundaries of disagreement about sexuality within the Living in Love and Faith process. These are some of the questions that LLF raises and about which there will be a discernment process following the phase of learning and listening together.

*Revd Robert Thompson:* Thank you for your answer, Sarah. I think what you are essentially saying is that there is no work apart from LLF being done on homophobia. Given that homophobia leads to really tragic consequences - perhaps homophobia was responsible for the tragic death of Father Alan Griffin and other people who have been in the news - what work is being done by the National Safeguarding Team in regard to addressing this question, simultaneously and apart from Living in Love and Faith?

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you, Robert, for your question. The first thing to be clear is that the House of Bishops is clear that there is no room for homophobia. The Living in Love and Faith workstream has been working with the National Safeguarding Team as well around this issue. There is joined-up work on it.

51. *Revd Robert Thompson (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Governance Review Group (paragraph 83) refers to the “withdrawal” of the House of Bishops’ 2020 Pastoral Statement. Like the 2005 Pastoral Statement, this affirmed that clergy “should not provide services of blessing for those who register a civil partnership” but also asked clergy approached for prayer by those entering such a partnership to “respond pastorally and sensitively in the light of the circumstances of each case”.

If the 2020 statement was indeed withdrawn, does this mean that clergy are now permitted to bless opposite-sex civil partnership?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Governance Review Group Report stated incorrectly that the House of Bishops 2020 Pastoral Statement had been withdrawn. In fact, the Statement was not withdrawn.

*Revd Robert Thompson (London):* Thank you again for your answer, Sarah. I note that the Government report said, “Here poor communication and lack of clarity in delegation allowed a public statement to be made which caused great distress and provoked a public and media backlash requiring withdrawal and public and internal apologies”. Your initial answer to the question which I set was that it has not been withdrawn. I wonder if there really needs to be a complete overhaul of communications since there seems to be an incorrect communication again in the Government’s report.

*The Bishop of London:* I will take your comment. Thank you very much for that, Robert.

52. *Dr Nick Land (York)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Those in favour of liberalising the Church of England's teaching on sexuality have suggested that this is an essential missional step to achieving church growth; whilst those who oppose change say it will cause schism and decline. Research on what has actually happened in terms of church growth, attendance and finances in other Anglican provinces and UK denominations would give us more objective information as to the likely outcomes of different proposals.

Therefore, before we consider specific proposals flowing from the LLF process will consideration be given to commissioning a survey to look at the outcome of similar processes within other Anglican provinces and UK denominations?

Given that that the Next Steps Group may have limited capacity to do the careful scoping and commissioning required - what additional resource would you require for such a study to be undertaken?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Thank you for sharing your desire for the Church to learn from the experiences of churches across the Anglican Communion and in other UK denominations.

The proposal you describe is an ambitious one as it would require an exploration of growth using a variety of metrics and then determining whether a causal relation with a church's decision-making regarding sexuality could be shown. A scoping exercise would therefore be needed to answer your question about what resources would be required to undertake such work. I will invite the Next Steps Group to consider this at their next meeting on 24th November 2021. More significantly, your question also presumes that LLF is a 'single issue' exercise, whereas the LLF resources invite much broader exploration concerning a range of questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage an exploration which is inherently missional in deepening Christian understanding about being human.

53. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the importance in the life of this Synod attached to engagement with Living in Love & Faith, will the Clerk to the Synod conduct a simple survey of members of Synod to determine the level of engagement with the LLF material, to establish and publish by February 2022:

1. The number who have engaged through reading alone;
2. The number who have engaged through group work in their local church.
3. The number who have engaged through group work with wider groups beyond the local church; and
4. The number who have not yet engaged with any material published by the LLF Group?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Thank you very much for highlighting the weight of responsibility that this Synod bears in relation to the Living in Love and Faith journey of learning, listening, discerning and deciding. Clearly, this responsibility presumes that all members of General Synod will have taken up the opportunity to engage with Living in Love

and Faith together with others in line with the Bishops' invitation and appeal in the LLF Book and Course.

How members of General Synod exercise this responsibility will have a bearing not only on the decisions it may be called to make but on what kind of church the Synod wishes to portray in the manner in which it carries out its particular role through this process.

I will invite the Next Steps Group to consider your proposal at its next meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

*Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich):* When the *Living in Love and Faith* book was first published, a copy was sent to every member of Synod. As we have a new Synod with, I think, 60% of new members, has the House of Bishops considered doing the same for all the new members of Synod, so they could engage with the printed copy of the book if that was their preference?

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you for your question. The Next Steps Group has not considered that, but I will take it to the next meeting. I would encourage members of Synod to engage with the material. It is all there online. You do not need a hard copy. Certainly for our journey over the next couple of years that is really important, but I will take away your suggestion.

54. *Mr Philip Baldwin (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Please can you outline what measures are in place to safeguard LGBTQ+ people engaged with the Living in Love and Faith process, including in relation to abuse directed to Synod members?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: It is unacceptable for people to be abused as a result of engaging with Living in Love and Faith. Measures to safeguard LGBTQIA+ people include:

- The guidance "Braver and safer: Creating spaces for learning together well", to help recognise, avoid and manage abusive and damaging behaviours;
- Support through 'LLF chaplains' in many dioceses;
- Diocesan LLF Advocate(s), who can be contacted regarding further provision available locally; and
- The LLF Enabling Officer, who can be contacted especially regarding abuse targeted at Synod members.

Finally, within Synod itself, Synod members are encouraged to avail themselves of these resources. In addition, members will engage with the Pastoral Principles in the July 2022 group of sessions. This will be an opportunity to raise awareness and understanding within Synod about behaviours which are damaging to others in the context of disagreements and diverse lived experiences.

*Mr Philip Baldwin:* Given the emailed homophobic abuse directed even at lay General Synod members by deanery synod representatives in the recent elections, how can the

measures set out in the answer safeguarding LGBTQ+ people in congregations where there is a vast imbalance of power?

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you for your question, Philip. I think that there is a challenge for us as Synod around how we are much better at receiving the position from somebody else's shoes, and I do think that we need to improve our understanding about the way in which our language, or the words we use, can offend people.

In my view, there is absolutely no place for any communication that is homophobic. That absolutely is not acceptable. If you have got any examples, let me know. In terms of members of Synod we have very little power open to us, but I think that the more we speak about it, the more we talk about it as unacceptable then I would hope that other members of Synod would behave appropriately and recognise the way in which comments and emails can offend people and, even more deeply, wound them. Thank you for your question.

55. *Revd Fiona Jack (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Prior to women being ordained to the episcopate there were women invited as participant observers to meetings of the House of Bishops, and in the report *From Lament to Action* the same is envisaged for people of colour. What plans are being formulated to allow openly LGBTQIA+ people similar access and participation given that much of the LLF process is about our status in the Church?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: There are no plans at present to invite openly LGBTQIA+ people to access and participate in House of Bishops' meetings. I will take your suggestion to the next meeting of the LLF Next Steps Group on 24 November.

*Revd Fiona Jack:* Thank you very much, Bishop Sarah, for your response about taking the idea of access from openly LGBTQIA people to the next meeting of the Bishops discussing LLF. So we do not lose sight of that, would you be able to report back to us on the deliberations of that meeting next week?

*The Bishop of London:* Yes, we openly communicate on the hub around Living in Love and Faith. I am very happy to feed back about that. Just to remind Synod that the best way at the moment to be influencing is in fact through engaging with the material. There is a way of feeding back. The process very much at the moment is about listening - it is about listening. Therefore, I would again commend to Synod to be involved and to encourage others to be involved so that we can hear voices, but I will take away the comment and we will report back to you about it in our communications.

56. *Mr Benjamin John (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In July 2021 General Synod Questions the Bishop of London stated, quoting from the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy (2015) that "The Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy (2015) states "for people who are unhappy about their sexual orientation [...] there may be grounds for exploring therapeutic options to help them live more comfortably with it, reduce their distress and reach a greater degree of

self-acceptance.” How is “self-acceptance” defined here and does it preclude therapy affirming the orthodox understanding of marriage?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* “Self-acceptance” as understood within the MoU is about better understanding one’s sexual orientation and learning to live more comfortably with it. This does not preclude a client affirming a traditional view of marriage. However, it is clearly inappropriate for therapists or counsellors to impose their own views of marriage upon their clients. A person-centred approach to therapy would properly take into account and work with the client’s own understanding of the nature of marriage.

*Mr Benjamin John:* Do the people for whom therapeutic options may be appropriate if they so seek it, and may hold a traditional understanding of marriage, include those under the age of 18?

*The Bishop of London:* Can you just repeat your question?

*Mr Benjamin John:* In the definitions in the Memorandum of Understanding of “people”, does that include those under the age of 18 where therapeutic options may well be necessary?

*The Bishop of London:* I do not think I can answer that question. I absolutely understand what you are getting at, but I do not want to speak off the hoof in a sense. I will make sure that we get a response to you. I recognise that what you are talking about is issues of consent and capacity and, therefore, I do not feel that I am best placed to give a completely accurate answer to that question.

57. *Dr Julie Maxwell (Winchester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the recommended resources and bibliography in “The Gift of the Church” relating to gender identity and transition include perspectives and resources that explore the different perspectives around the concept of gender identity and/or support adults and especially children experiencing gender dysphoria to live in accordance with their biological sex?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* Just to clarify, ‘The Gift of the Church’ and the proposal for a bibliography of resources about gender identity and transition are two completely separate initiatives, and your question is, I believe, about the latter.

The aims of this resource are to help the Church to be better informed about the questions relating to gender identity, fluidity and transition that are being so hotly debated in society; and to better understand the deeply damaging impact of these debates on trans and gender fluid people and others affected by them. The resource is not intended to make recommendations or support particular perspectives.

58. *Revd Mae Christie (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In 2017, General Synod backed a motion calling for a ban on Conversion Therapy and, more recently, numerous bishops have publicly called upon Her Majesty’s Government to formally ban this destructive practice. At the same time, this House specifically

recommends conversion therapy in “Issues in Human Sexuality” (5.8). How can the House account for this contradiction?

*The Bishop of London (Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* One of the reasons that the Church has embarked on the Living in Love and Faith project is because it recognised the failure of previous attempts, such as *Issues in Human Sexuality*, to enable the Church to find a way forward together. We are therefore currently in an uncomfortable period of transition within which such perceived contradictions occur.

For the record, paragraph 5.8 in *Issues of Human Sexuality* does not refer explicitly to conversion therapy nor does it use the language of ‘recommendation’. It states: ‘In the situation of the bisexual it can also be that counselling will help the person concerned to discover the truth of their personality and to achieve a degree of inner healing.’

*Revd Mae Christie:* In 2017 this House voted to ban conversion therapy which is recommended in *Issues of Human Sexuality* - if you have not read it, you should. It is still the case that every ordinand in the Church of England is required to acknowledge or assent to or understand *Issues in Human Sexuality* before they are ordained. Will the House of Bishops stop this immediately, as it is effectively forcing people to assent to something in direct contravention of this Synod?

*The Bishop of London:* Thank you for your question. We do not ask people to assent to it. We ask them to explore it and to read and understand it and be willing to live within the guidance. Living in Love and Faith is, in a sense, an opportunity for us to relook at this and to explore what therefore we discern is the way forward. Therefore, I understand people’s, I suppose, frustration at the length of the process, but this is the process in which the *Issues of Human Sexuality* should be explored and considered, and we take that forward in that way. I would encourage you to engage in that.

*Revd Mae Christie (London):* May I ask a second supplementary?

*The Chair:* No, sorry.

*Unidentified Speaker:* Sarah, I would really like you to clarify what you have just said because you have said that *Issues in Human Sexuality* is something that candidates are asked to explore and not assent to. However, I have been a BAP adviser and certainly on the papers that we get people are asked whether they are abiding by the regulations that are set out in *Issues in Human Sexuality*. A clarification of what you have just said is really necessary.

*The Bishop of London:* First of all, the DBO are asked to explore it with them, so it is about a conversation, and all candidates are asked to explore it with them. They are then asked to confirm that they have read and understood it, and that they are willing to live within its guidance. That is what they are asked to do.

*The Chair:* Questions 59 to 69 to be answered by the Bishop of Huddersfield.

59. *Mrs Jane Rosam (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Further to the answer given by the Bishop of Huddersfield, Dr Jonathan Gibbs, to a question during the Safeguarding item at General Synod in July 2021 and the statement in paragraph 3.1 of GS 2215 that “The members will not be employees of the Archbishops’ Council, so it has been important to frame the relationship appropriately”, what steps have been taken to ensure the independence, including financial independence, of the Independent Safeguarding Board?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Independent Safeguarding Board (“ISB”) is appointed by a panel, including survivor representatives, independent of the church’s leadership. ISB members are not employees, but independent contractors in order to ensure that they are not subject to a relationship of control or subordination. The ISB Chair has drafted Terms of Reference for the Board which underline its independence from the church structure, and the independence of its work plan and its recommendations, is written into members’ contracts.

60. *Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In order to reassure Synod members and the wider Church of England and public that existing checks and balances are effective, and in the interests of openness and transparency, will the Archbishops’ Council undertake to publish anonymised statistical analysis at the conclusion of the PCR2 project showing, for each diocese, the number of cases referred by the independent reviewers as showing cause for concern, and whether or not - prior to the PCR2 referral - those cases had been considered by the diocese following a complaint, by an Archbishop in response to a CDM complaint about the bishop’s handling of the case, and/or by an NST Core Group; and specify the outcome of those considerations?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The final PCR2 report will include thematic recommendations, the total number of files reviewed and the overall number of new cases or cause for concerns that independent reviewers have identified within the PCR2 process. As is normal practice all data within the final report will be anonymised and it is not proposed to include specific information surrounding any particular case.

*Mr Gavin Drake:* You will be aware that the eighth recommendation from the IICSA Report calls for regular audits and for the reports to be published. Could the House of Bishops reconsider that, because I did not ask in the question for specific information about particular cases to be reported on but for statistical analysis, so we can see and check for ourselves as part of an audit as to whether the external reviewers see problems in the churches and dioceses’ handling of cases by our own internal systems have not recognised those problems. I think we need to do that for audit.

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Gavin, thank you very much for your question. I think we return partly to some of the questions we have heard earlier on today about the relationship between the national Church and dioceses. There will be a national report arising out of PCR2 which will deal with statistical trends. The responsibility for the

publication of the results of PCR2 audits in each diocese rests with the trustees of that diocese.

What is happening is that the PCR2 board has issued guidelines for the way in which reports should be put together in each diocese. It is anticipated at the moment, for instance, there might be some form of executive summary, but it will be for the trustees of the dioceses, the DBF, the Bishop's Council and so on, to decide what should be published locally, and those questions should be asked of each diocese about what has been published in that context, but the national report will be about statistical trends.

61. *Revd Canon Simon Talbott (Ely)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Metropolitan Police Report dated 4/10/19 of retired judge Sir Richard Henriques into false allegations by a complainant "Nick" against numerous public figures in the course of "Operation Midland" made a number of recommendations to prevent future injustice, and of the skewing of investigations by bad practice.

Recommendation 2 at page 384 identified a source of such bad practice, and made clear that, "The instruction to believe a victim's account" should cease, it should be the duty of an officer interviewing a complainant to investigate the facts objectively and impartially and with an open mind from the outset of the investigation". What steps have been taken to ensure that this recommendation informs all C of E core groups and investigations commissioned by them, and to ensure redress is available to any respondent who finds that such a false presumption is being applied in their case?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops 2017 Practice Guidance: Responding, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns or allegations against church officers 3.3 is very clear that the aim of an internal church investigation is to establish whether or not there are ongoing safeguarding concerns; the aim is not to establish the guilt of the respondent. 4.2 of the guidance sets out clear guidance when an investigation finds the concern or allegation is unsubstantiated and there are no ongoing safeguarding risks. Caseworkers both nationally and in dioceses utilise all their skills to conduct an unbiased, open minded investigation. Conclusions and recommendations to the core group, are to address risk and based on unbiased review of the available evidence. Where there is evidence that the person raising the concern has done so maliciously, the core group will consider the advice to link the respondent to statutory agencies where this may be addressed.

*Revd Canon Simon Talbott:* Thank you for your answer, Bishop Jonathan. Can I ask subsequently: does this mean that it is improper for DSOs and core groups to breach the duty of impartiality by adopting the opening premise "the complainant must be believed"?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Simon, thank you very much indeed for your question and indeed for all of your work in advocacy in this area.

The importance of impartiality in the work of the core groups has been reflected in the original guidance with regard to conflicts of interest and so on, and a new policy, a much

more detailed policy, on conflict of interest has been published recently and is now available.

It is hugely important there should be trust and confidence in that process, and what I would want to do is to affirm the importance of the work of our professional colleagues and DSOs in due course in this kind of context, so that there is both a thoroughness and a perceived/seen fairness in the way in which people go about things. There is always a balance.

It is hugely important that we hear the voice of survivors. For too long it has been so difficult for people to come forward and tell us the story of what has happened to them. Listening to them and hearing their voices and acknowledging the pain of survivors and listening to that carefully is crucially important. There is a redressing of the balance. Equally important is the question of fairness, impartiality and objectivity in the way in which those questions are then explored and investigated. Thank you.

62. *Ven. Ian Bishop (Chester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In the light of the pressure being experienced by many diocesan safeguarding advisers, could the National Safeguarding Team share the results of any evidence being collected concerning their wellbeing?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The NST does not collect this information systematically. However, some diocesan safeguarding advisers have reported that they are working under significant pressure. As the employer, the diocese has a duty of care to its diocesan safeguarding advisers under the DSA Regulations 2016, bishops have a legal responsibility to ensure they have access to professional supervision and time to undertake continuing professional development on safeguarding matters. The NST urges dioceses to speak with their safeguarding teams to ensure that resources are adequate to ensure their wellbeing and to deliver a good service.

*Ven. Ian Bishop:* Jonathan, I have been encouraged to ask this question by a number of DSAs across the country. They are all, as we all are, committed to safeguarding and getting this right, but there is an increasing divergence between NST expectations and diocesan resources available to fund those expectations. We are deeply grateful for the heroic work of DSAs, I know, but there is an increasing anxiety that they are picking up the gap between expectation and reality, and some of them are tired and stressed. Would you consider, please, commissioning an independent report into the wellbeing of DSAs across the country?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Ian, thank you very much indeed. Again, I am caught between two stools here. The first thing I want to say is to express my huge thanks to our colleagues, the DSAs across the Church of England, and to all those who are working with them to improve the quality of safeguarding work in our dioceses. I am enormously grateful to all of our dioceses, and, indeed, my colleagues the diocesan bishops, for their leadership on that at a time of challenge financially and in all sorts of other ways for the Church of England.

The first thing is to stress the importance of and my thanks to all those involved in safeguarding in our dioceses. They do absolutely sterling work and it is enormously appreciated.

Having said that, we are also aware that over the last few years, and especially in the light of IICSA, we are recognising the need for substantial change. There is a considerable programme of work going on arising from IICSA which is as yet far from complete. I am profoundly aware that that journey of change is imposing further resource challenges on our dioceses. My colleagues in the NST are indeed picking up some of those signs of strain.

We need to find ways of working together to ensure on the one hand we continue on the journey of improvement in the quality and depth of our work on safeguarding and, on the other hand, that we take full account of the needs of our professionals, our DSAs and their colleagues, working in our dioceses. This is about partnership.

My colleagues in the NST are beginning to pick up some of those signs and we taking those very seriously. It is going to be really important that we work in partnership with our colleagues in the dioceses to see what the impact is and to then look at how we can ensure that our safeguarding teams are adequately resourced in the dioceses. The short answer is, yes, we need to find ways of doing that, and exploring the realities of the pressures people are under and then working together in partnership. Of course, you are absolutely right that the resourcing of independent safeguarding teams rests with the dioceses themselves. The key thing I want to stress is thanks to all of those involved and ask how do we take forward this in partnership together?

63. *Revd Fiona Jack (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the recent very public reports on social and in print media of safeguarding concerns around the pastoral ministry received by LGBTQIA+ people in the Church, can the National Safeguarding Team indicate:

- a) How many of these cases have been referred to them; and
- b) what plans there are to outline what is and what is not acceptable prayer ministry with LGBTQIA+ people in transient and specific terms?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:

- a) As a general rule the NST investigate concerns against Bishops and Deans. As pastoral ministry is mainly delivered by clergy other than Bishops and Deans referrals for this type of concern are unlikely to be addressed by the NST. The NST do not record the numbers, however NST have provided some guidance and advice on a small number of matters that have been referred either via Safeguarding mailbox or through diocesan safeguarding advisers.
- b) The Government has recently launched its consultation on banning conversion therapy. As part of its response to the consultation, the Church will articulate how to identify prayer that causes harm to LGBTQIA+ people while allowing the prayer life of the church to continue to flourish.

64. *Professor Helen King (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In July 2021 the National Safeguarding Team confirmed that the Makin review would be published “in 2022”

([ps://www.churchofengland.org/media-and-news/press-releases/update-smyth-review](https://www.churchofengland.org/media-and-news/press-releases/update-smyth-review)).

As 2022 is only a few weeks away, when in 2022 will the review be published?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: We deeply regret the length of time this review is taking, and we understand the impact that this is having on victims and survivors, however the reviewers are processing an exceptionally large amount of information. A last call for evidence was announced on the 29th July, with a submission date of the 30th September. The reviewers are in the process of following up new information and writing their report. An announcement will be made in due course when we have clearer information on a publication date.

*Professor Helen King:* I would just like to ask a question about the “exceptionally large” amount of information being processed. Can you confirm as Lead Bishop that the Church of England in the Makin review is not investigating or addressing the abuse against boys in Africa from 1984 to 2013? Could you also confirm that the Church of England is not investigating how many were abused after 2013 here when the Church of England, Lambeth and the NST had knowledge of the abuse?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Helen, thank you. The Church of England ultimately has responsibility and authority to investigate what happens within its own boundaries, within England. What I can tell you is that the Archbishop of Canterbury has written to the Primate in South Africa both encouraging investigation of what went on and offering support for that.

With regard to the question of the Makin review and its timing, yes, it had boundaries and it is a learning lessons review within a certain remit. On the other hand, if and when evidence comes forward of abuse which has taken place outside of its specific remit then that evidence is taken seriously, and further investigation into what comes to light will be and must be undertaken.

65. *Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the 27th of October edition of “Private Eye”, the contents of an email secured under a subject access request, was made public following the conclusion of CDM allegations in the respondent’s favour : The then Bishop at Lambeth acknowledged to senior NST staff that the trustees of Christ Church Oxford were using the Church of England procedures in a questionable manner against their Dean; the precise terms of the email reference was “I think we are being played but we all know that”.

What steps were taken in the light of that suspicion, for the NST to scrutinise further complaints with special care, and to pass on an appropriate warning to the diocese of Oxford that there might be more to any subsequent complaints than met the eye?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: Allegations and concerns referred to the National Safeguarding

Team are reviewed and addressed in accordance with the 2017 practice guidance: Responding to, assessing and managing safeguarding concerns. Each allegation and concern is assessed on its own individual merits according to the guidance.

*Mr Martin Sewell:* The answer makes clear that after recognising that it had been played by third parties, the Church did nothing. Has consideration been given to offering an act of restorative justice by stating unequivocally and clearly that from the point of view of the NST and the national Church there is currently no impediment to the Dean of Christchurch resuming his ministry as soon as his health allows it?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* I think there are a number of hypotheticals in that question, but let me go on just a little further, Martin. On the language of “being played”, if it is acknowledged that certain people are trying to “play” the NST, the reality is we play it by the book, and we always have to play it by the book. Whatever other games people play, my colleagues seek to respond to questions in terms of playing it by the book.

We have issued a statement with regard to the case of the Dean in question. Beyond that, I think it is our general rule that responding to questions about particular cases in a context like this always leads us into the risk of straying into confidential information which we are not at liberty to share.

*Revd Canon Mark Bennet (Oxford):* In a situation where you do become aware that you might be being played, what safeguards are put in place for the person being complained against?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* I think I would refer to my previous answer. There is something about being as wise as serpents and as gentle as doves in all this. What the team always seeks to do is to ensure that things are done by the book, and that appropriate support is put in place for the people about whom a complaint might be made. But the reality is that the process has to be followed insofar as it is deemed that a complaint is a valid complaint by a person who has a right to make a complaint, and then that needs to be followed through, otherwise we are in great danger of seeking to exercise some kind of discretion in a way that would surely lead to the accusation that we are failing to take complaints seriously. It is between a rock and a hard place, but it is about making sure that we play it by the book and that appropriate support is put in place, both for those who bring complaints and those who are complained against?

66. *Mrs Kat Alldread (Derby) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:* Can you please advise how many people have been assisted to date, under the Church’s Interim Support Scheme?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* To date, 38 individuals have been assisted by the Interim Support Scheme pilot. Applicants continue to approach the Scheme and are having their needs considered by the panel on a regular basis.

67. *Mrs Kat Alldread (Derby) asked the Chair of the House of Bishops:* During the IICSA inquiry there was some uncertainty as to whether a formal apology to the victim Fr Matt

Ineson had been sent and received. Can you please confirm that an apology (both in respect of the abuse by a member of clergy, and the church's handling of his complaint) has now been delivered to Fr Ineson and provide for General Synod the date on which it was delivered?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* It is not appropriate as a rule to comment on individual cases, but in this case the Archbishop of Canterbury's apology is referred to publicly in the proceedings of the IICSA inquiry. The review into the case of Trevor Devamanikkam commissioned by the NST, which has in scope the Church's collective response, has been referred to the Independent Safeguarding Board for advice on how to proceed. It is not appropriate for me to comment further at this stage.

*Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester):* In this case of Matthew Ineson, he has indicated he has refused to co-operate with the inquiry or allow his data to be released because neither he nor the family of his abuser have been consulted on the terms of reference of the inquiry. If that is the case, is the reality that the review is *de facto* dead in the water?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Again, I am not going to go into that detail and to enter into speculation about the issues that have been raised. What I can tell you is that the case has been referred to the Independent Safeguarding Board for its advice about how we proceed, and we wait on its advice.

68. *Mr Clive Billenness (Europe)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In view of the substantial body of published medical research identifying the physical and psychological harm caused to individuals of any age targeted by or simply witnessing incidents of bullying, and which therefore constitute 'abuse', what guidance has been given to Diocesan Safeguarding Teams on managing such incidents as a Safeguarding Matter where a victim states that they have suffered physiological or psychological harm?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops:* Definitions of abuse have been recently updated and are being considered by the House of Bishops. Bullying, including cyber bullying, can be a form of abuse and in some circumstances will warrant a safeguarding response. In other circumstances, other responses are more appropriate (e.g. human resources policies and procedures in an employment context). The NST will be updating guidance in respect of responding to safeguarding concerns of all forms of abuse during 2022.

*Mr Clive Billenness (Europe):* Bishop Jonathan, I welcome your news that the definitions of abuse have been updated to address what research and emails I receive from victims has revealed to be a significant problem within churches, and not just the Anglican Church.

May I ask what arrangements will be made to consult more widely on the definitions which have been updated, including of the victims of this form of abuse, so that the circumstances under which a safeguarding response will be made can be clearly defined and understood and included in training for safeguarding officers?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield:* Thank you very much. There is a process underway at the moment whereby the draft policy Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults, has been through an extensive process of consultation and is coming back to the House of Bishops, all being well, at its meeting in December. That process of consultation has included consultation with victims and survivors of abuse. That is always a hugely important part of how we handle these things.

Essentially, again we are caught, and what the guidance will seek to do is to clarify at what point does something move from being unhealthy behaviour towards abuse. That is one thing. There is a spectrum of behaviours. On the other hand, when is this genuinely a safeguarding matter, to which the usual answer is does it concern a child or a vulnerable adult? Then there is also a need for clarity about what is meant by those terms. The short answer to your question is yes, the process of consultation is underway, and, secondly, we are in the process of finalising what that guidance looks like. We hope and believe that it will offer considerable help in providing clarity in dealing with these difficult cases in the future.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Bishop. That brings Questions to an end. Thank you, members of Synod ---

*Unidentified Speaker:* Chair, we have only covered 52% of all the questions asked and we have been interrupted by timing. We are in the middle of a very important issue. This is the primary way in which members of Synod are able to ask questions and ask for clarification. Please can we urge the Business Committee to consider ways in which in future sessions of Synod there can be more time given to this really important business of answering questions?

*The Chair:* Thank you, Ian. I cannot do anything about it, but I know the Chair of the Business Committee can. May I just thank you for the way in which you have asked questions and the issues that have been raised - some really important stuff.

*Questions not reached during Synod.*

69. *Canon Izzy McDonald-Booth (Newcastle)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Has the House of Bishops recently been given additional advice from the National Safeguarding Team that states that deliverance ministry is never appropriate to change, suppress or influence a person's sexuality, regardless of apparent consent?

*The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The revised version of the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults reiterates at section 4.15: "For the avoidance of any doubt, and in line with the decision of the General Synod of the Church of England in July 2017, it is made clear that nobody, whether a member of a Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Team or otherwise, is permitted to use any form of deliverance ministry in pursuit of changing or influencing somebody's sexual orientation. This applies whether or not the individual concerned wishes to receive such ministry. Individuals asking for such ministry must be treated with compassion and understanding, and should be referred both to pastoral

support and to links to appropriate resources.” This draft guidance will be reviewed by the House of Bishops in December.

## CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

70. *Mr Stephen Hofmeyr (Guildford)* asked the Church Commissioners: Whilst the Route-map to Net Zero by 2030 Consultation takes place, what funding has been made available to parishes (whether by way of grants, subsidies or loans) to assist them in meeting the Church’s net zero commitment?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied on behalf of the Church Commissioners: Funding has been made available to develop the Energy Footprint Toolkit, across all the Church’s main building types, and to better resource the national Environment Programme. This additional funding has in part been used to hire fundraising expertise to help develop future funding for parishes, fund small projects in dioceses across the country, develop training, and support a strong faith voice in the run up to COP26. Parishes can also benefit from a nationally subsidised energy audit which churches can commission through Parish Buying.

71. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Church Commissioners: Over 75 years after the publication of “Towards the Conversion of England”, will the Church Commissioners now treat the re-evangelisation of England as its overriding priority in the discretionary allocation of financial resources above and beyond legally required expenditure?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied on behalf of the Church Commissioners: I am pleased to be a member of the time limited Triennium Funding Working Group which brings together members of the House of Bishops, Archbishops’ Council and Church Commissioners. This group has begun its work to provide the Archbishops’ Council and Church Commissioners with recommendations on how funds the Commissioners make available in 2023-25 should be allocated to support our Church’s needs and opportunities. Its key focus will be how to support the Vision and Strategy on which the Synod has a presentation tomorrow afternoon.

This looks forward to a future where:

- mixed ecology is the norm in every local context
- the parish system is revitalised for mission from which flows a flourishing of new Christian communities
- every person has the opportunity to encounter the transformation that a life centred on Jesus Christ can bring.

72. *Mr Jonathan Baird (Salisbury)* asked the Church Commissioners: In the consultation process for the proposals, which are outlined in GS 2222 (Review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure), how many submissions were received and how many contained objections? And when will such submissions be placed in the public domain (as they are in any planning matter)?

*The Bishop of Manchester* replied on behalf of the Church Commissioners: The consultation on the Review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure closed on the 31 October

2021. The results are now being analysed and we do not yet have the detailed breakdown of the responses. Over 1,700 responses have been received, either by email or through the online survey. The plan is to present the analysis of the responses to General Synod in 2022 in a GS Misc paper, if the Business Committee gives permission. The Commissioners are also planning to host a fringe event to discuss the GS Misc paper. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the consultation all the contributions were greatly appreciated.

We have written an introductory leaflet on the review. See <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/parish-reorganisation-and-church-property/review-mission-and-pastoral-measure-2011>.

73. *Revd Marcus Walker (London)* asked the Church Commissioners: Would the Church Commissioners please list, by diocese, the expectations for (a) pastoral reorganisations and (b) closures given to the Church Commissioners in their survey detailed in sections 26-28 of GS 2222?

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* replied on behalf of the Church Commissioners: It is not possible to provide a diocesan breakdown of the expectations for pastoral reorganisation and church closure as the information was given on the basis that the responses would be kept confidential. The aim of the exercise was to get an overview of the possible general trends. The numbers summarised in GS2222 are only intended to give a high-level indication of possible trends and should not be taken as representative of any detailed plans.

74. *Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry)* asked the Church Commissioners: Can I congratulate the Church Commissioners on approval being given by Her Majesty for your appointment of a new First Church Estates Commissioner and ask for an opportunity to meet the new Commissioner with a delegation, to discuss the plight of Parishes and Parish Churches who are struggling to make ends meet and facing closure or have no clergy to call their own, to explore how the Church Commissioners could address the financial and resourcing challenges Parishes and Parish Churches are currently facing?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio)* replied as First Church Estates Commissioner: I am very grateful for this warm welcome and will of course be delighted to meet Mr Margrave and other colleagues to discuss ways in which the Church Commissioners can continue to support parishes.

A considerable amount of our funding does support the cost of clergy and others involved in 'front line' mission and ministry. This was nearly £100m last year (nearly double the previous year's amount).

Along with the House of Bishops and Archbishops' Council we will continue to review the prioritisation of resources and I assure Synod that all the participants in these discussions are well aware of the critical importance of parish ministry.

75. *Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham)* asked the Church Commissioners: In July 2020 I asked a question about Queen Anne's Bounty and the international slave trade. It

was stated that a working group had been set up to look at this. Has there been able to be any progress by the group on this issue?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* The sub-group established by the Church Commissioners' Board to oversee this work has engaged independent accountants to undertake detailed research and analysis, and they are also aided by academic experts with relevant experience and knowledge, as well as NCI staff.

The research is in progress and we will share the findings in a transparent way once it has been completed, which we expect to be during 2022. The group's Terms of Reference were shared with Synod members in July 2021.

76. *Revd Canon Dr Rachel Mann (Manchester)* asked the Church Commissioners: Have the Church Commissioners considered signing the 30x30 commitment to protect at least 30% of nature by 2030, in line with the UK Government's own commitment to this target?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* In addition to our 2050 Net Zero target, we are also committed to tackling nature loss, and were the first investor to support the Science Based Targets for Nature initiative.

The 30x30 commitment made by the UK Government in 2020 is aligned with the Commissioners' ambitions to support the recovery of nature and we will be continuing to review our current commitments in the coming months to understand whether we should also sign up to this initiative.

We are passionate about protecting nature and biodiversity, as well as moving to a carbon neutral investment fund. In the last week, we have committed to becoming signatories of a Nature-Based Solutions Compact, led by the National Trust. This set of ambitious guiding principles seeks to ensure solutions deliver for nature and climate. This will sit alongside ongoing work to engage with farming tenants to consider more nature-friendly farming incentives and set a clear strategic vision.

77. *Revd Canon Anne Brown (Truro)* asked the Church Commissioners: In light of the Church Commissioners' August announcement that it is developing a 'net zero carbon strategy for its land investments', can the Commissioners state what will happen to the approximately 5,000 acres of deep peat soils they own in the Cambridgeshire Fens, and how it will be managed to reduce carbon emissions from the eroding peat soils?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* All the Church Commissioners' land holdings in the Cambridgeshire Fens are held within farming tenancies, some of which are historic arrangements with security for our tenants to farm for up to three generations. Following a desktop carbon baseline assessment, we are developing a full environmental strategy, seeking to find ways of encouraging more carbon friendly farming practices including cultivation methods that particularly benefit peaty soils to prevent erosion.

We continue to work on understanding the extent of the Commissioners' ownership of deep peat soils. The holdings around the Fens may be areas of focus including carrying

out individual assessment and monitoring, with a view to developing collaborative approaches between landlord and tenant, allowing wildlife improvements across the Commissioners' estate as well as sequestering further carbon and protecting soil health.

78. *Revd Canon Anne Brown (Truro)* asked the Church Commissioners: The Independent highlighted in June of this year that BP is planning to drill for gas on the edge of the world's largest cold-water reef off the coast of west Africa. What are the National Investing Bodies doing to raise concerns about this with BP?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* The Commissioners do not hold BP shares, which limits our ability to engage.

We support Climate Action 100+'s engagement with BP. Aligning capital expenditure with the energy transition is vital to a net zero plan, and is included in the CA100+ Net Zero Benchmark, which informs all engagements. Limiting capital expenditure and expansion will also reduce the sector's impact on fragile habitats.

In accordance with our commitment to Synod, the NIBs engage with high carbon companies, and will divest any fossil fuel companies not aligned with Paris by 2023. In practice, companies with plans to significantly expand capacity, in a way that is not consistent with the energy transition, won't pass this hurdle.

The impact of our Responsible Investment approach was demonstrated in June when we helped to replace a quarter of ExxonMobil's Directors with individuals with climate and energy transition expertise. These new directors have started to influence the company's strategic direction, as a result of which we hope to see, and will continue to press for, further progress.

79. *Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds)* asked the Church Commissioners: As more than 20 bishops from Southern Africa, as well as a resolution passed by the Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, have called for a halt to oil and gas exploration in Africa, do the National Investment Bodies (NIBs) have a plan to divest from any oil and gas company that disregards this call from the Southern African Bishops and continues fossil fuel exploration in Africa?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* The Commissioners address exploration and extraction plans when engaging with oil and gas companies. The Climate Action 100+ Net Zero Benchmark includes alignment of capital expenditure with Paris goals, which informs our engagements and AGM voting.

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to influence the company's strategic direction, as a result of which we hope to see, and will continue to press for, further progress.

The NIBs engage with companies failing to uphold UN Guiding Principles on Human Rights, among others. Companies that consistently demonstrate poor ESG practices can be restricted from investment.

80. *Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham)* asked the Church Commissioners: According to a Bloomberg article in September, French oil company Total is among the oil companies planning to expand Arctic oil and gas production by 20% over the next five years. Given this, are the NIBs urgently engaging with Total with a view to divestment if it does not abandon these plans?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* We do engage with Total. The company now assesses new investments for consistency with Paris and we have asked that its capital expenditure plans be aligned with a 1.5C scenario. This covers Arctic assets, where high costs and emissions are misaligned with Paris, and also the curtailment of new exploration and production projects worldwide.

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81. *Revd Robert Lawrance (Newcastle)* asked the Church Commissioners: At the last Synod in July 2021, the Church Commissioners stated that "land in the Commissioners' ownership included approximately 2,094 acres of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 948 acres (i.e. 45%) of which were in a 'favourable' condition". Have the Church Commissioners set any targets to increase the percentage of 'favourable' SSSIs in their possession?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* As yet the Commissioners have not set any formal targets to increase the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the rural portfolio as we wish first to continue to develop our strategy regarding tenant engagement. It is important that where targets are set these are realistic and achievable, being objectives that we can fully endorse.

All of the SSSIs within our ownership (approximately 17 sites) are managed by farm tenants, and we will continue to work with all stakeholders to encourage enhancement of the condition of designated sites.

Where parts of SSSIs are considered to be in 'unfavourable' condition these are being prioritised - such as land adjoining Wybunbury Moss SSSI in Cheshire. A 10-year lease has been granted to Natural England to allow reversion from arable farming to species rich grassland to protect the adjoining floating lowland bog.

82. *Revd Andrew Yates (Truro)* asked the Church Commissioners: What is the NIBs' policy on the burning of biomass, in particular with regard to investment in companies involved in such activities?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* Whilst the NIBs do not have an explicit policy on biomass, we are aware of its broader environmental impacts. The NIBs use the Transition Pathways Initiative's carbon performance assessment data, which covers the use of biomass in energy generation, to inform engagements on the topic. For example, the Commissioners have had successful engagements with a major paper manufacturer on their emissions from biomass energy generators, leading to improved emissions and renewable energy targets.

A small share (6%) of offcuts and timber unsuitable for other uses from our forestry investments go into biomass energy production. We also have a small holding in a pellet facility, which uses feedstock from forest thinning operations, which are necessary in order to grow high quality, large diameter timber suitable for construction purposes where carbon is locked up for the long term.

83. *Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham)* asked the Church Commissioners: In 2020, according to their annual report, the Church Commissioners made an excellent return of 10.4% on their assets which at year end were £9.2bn, an asset growth of approximately £867m. Of this, £281m was dispersed through LInC and SDF and to support the Pension Fund. Of the remaining £586m, how much went towards management fees and costs, how much was kept back to protect the assets against devaluation through inflation and to ensure intergenerational justice in resourcing, and on what basis?

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio) replied as First Church Estates Commissioner:* Asset values are reported after all Investment management costs (which are detailed in our Annual Report). So all of the increase in value enhances the ability of the fund to release sustainable current and future distributions, informed by the assessment of our actuaries.

Returns in any one year only play a small part in that assessment as financial and real estate markets, where the fund has most of its investments, are volatile. It is long-term returns and, importantly, projections of future returns which determine the level of sustainable distributions.

As my predecessor told Synod in July, "The Commissioners aim to distribute the maximum funding for mission and ministry that can be maintained in real terms into the future. This balances the needs of the current and future beneficiaries: the task of a permanent endowment."

Over the current triennium (2020-22), we have plans to distribute £930m and in the coming months we will be considering how much can be distributed in 2023-25.

## PENSIONS BOARD

84. *Revd Canon Dr Rachel Mann (Manchester)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: Shell is going ahead with plans in the UK North Sea for the development of the new Cambo oil field, whose emissions would be equivalent to the annual carbon pollution from 18 coal-fired power stations. Has the Pensions Board's engagement with Shell included very strong objections to this plan? As this is not Paris compliant, would implementation of this plan by Shell trigger divestment by the Pensions Board?

*Mr Clive Mather (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Pensions Board:* We have recently held detailed engagement with Shell around the disclosures we expect on capital expenditure and absolute emissions reductions targets in line with the statement the Pensions Board delivered at the Shell AGM. The outcome of these ongoing discussions will be a basis to assess alignment of projects such as Shell's 30% stake in Siccar Energy that is leading the development of the Cambo oil field.

Cambo was not specifically discussed at the most recent engagement which focussed on the fundamental framework of disclosure of capital expenditure alignment to Shell's targets and the International Energy Agency 1.5 degree of warming scenario. We expect to raise alignment of such projects at the forthcoming engagement.

As set out to General Synod we will be making an assessment in 2023, based upon the independent analysis of the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI), whether Shell is aligned to the Goals of the Paris Agreement.

85. *Ven. Elizabeth Snowden (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the Pensions Board: Until now, the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) has not included a scenario to measure alignment of companies with the 1.5C goal of the Paris Agreement. Following the publication of a 1.5C scenario in the International Energy Agency's (IEA's) World Energy Outlook, has this yet been adopted within the TPI's assessment of carbon performance? Is the IEA's 1.5C scenario now a criteria to determine whether the NIBs divest from an oil and gas company in 2023, as the NIBs' Report to General Synod in July 2021 suggested?

*Mr Clive Mather (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Pensions Board:* Yes. The IEA only published a 1.5C scenario in May 2021. After assessment of the scenario, the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) made a public statement that it will be incorporated into TPI's analysis, beginning in Quarter 4 of 2021.

<https://www.transitionpathwayinitiative.org/publications/53?type=NewsArticle>

The next TPI Energy Report will include for the first time the 1.5C as a benchmark to assess companies.

The Synod Resolution specifically stated disinvestment from fossil fuel companies not aligned ‘...with the goal of the Paris Agreement to restrict the global average temperature rise to well below 2°C.’

The NIBs will be using the updated assessment from TPI as a basis to inform its decisions in 2023.

## **SECRETARY GENERAL**

86. *Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich)* asked the Secretary General: How does the Secretary General intend to include an understanding of the 2014 Settlement in the induction process for all newly elected or appointed members of the General Synod, as recommended in GS 2225?

*Mr William Nye replied as the Secretary General:* There is a briefing document which has been drafted and published as part of the induction documents in the Synod Resources page of the website, and can be found here.

In addition, this will be covered as part of the formal induction programme on the afternoon of Monday 15 November.

87. *Dr Rosalind Clarke (Lichfield)* asked the Secretary General: In GS 2225, the report from the Implementation and Dialogue Group on the House of Bishops’ Declaration there were, among others, the following recommendations:

Recommendation Ten: That an understanding of the 2014 Settlement be part of the induction process for all newly elected or appointed members of the General Synod.

Recommendation Eleven: That resources reflecting the facts and practical implications of the 2014 Settlement are developed to communicate the procedural mechanisms to members of Deanery and Diocesan Synods, in particular the laity.

Recommendation Twelve: That the Church of England communications division, working with other staff, develop material suitable for communication to media and to others outside the Church about the House of Bishops Declaration and the Church’s position on living with difference. Such material should be suitable also for use by diocesan communications officers.

What progress has been made on these recommendations?

*Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General:* For recommendation 10, a briefing document has been drafted as part of the induction resources for members of the General Synod, and can be found here. In addition, this will be covered as part of the formal induction programme on the afternoon of Monday 15 November.

It has not yet been possible to convene the Standing Commission of the House of Bishops. Once it has been established, one its first pieces of work will be to look at the recommendations from the Implementation and Dialogue Group, and to consider whether

and how they should be put into practice, including the other recommendations mentioned in the question.

## **CLERK TO THE SYNOD**

88. *Dr Rosalind Clarke (Lichfield)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: What was the 'turnout' in the elections to the 2021 General Synod by diocese and by Houses? (please also provide comparative figures from 2015 and 2010)

*Dr Jacqui Philips replied as Clerk to the Synod:* A breakdown of turnout by diocese and by Houses in the years 2021, 2015 and 2010 has been posted on the notice board.

89. *Mrs Catherine Stephenson (Leeds)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: Is there the opportunity for analysis of the whole election process for members of the clergy, laity and special constituencies to General Synod, which would include identifying good practice that every diocese should consequently adopt in time for the next quinquennium?

*Dr Jacqui Philips replied as Clerk to the Synod:* The General Synod Business Committee will form the Elections Review Group (ERG) in the New Year to carry out this analysis. The resulting report of the Elections Review Group will make recommendations for good practice in the future. Synod members and others are welcome to make submissions to the ERG to assist it with this work.

90. *Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: Given the widespread reports of difficulties experienced in the recent elections to this General Synod what plans are there for a thorough review of the election rules and their implementation and will all those involved (including candidates and electors) be invited to contribute to any such review?

*Dr Jacqui Philips replied as Clerk to the Synod:* The General Synod Business Committee will re-establish the Elections Review Group (ERG) early in 2022. The ERG will carry out an extensive review of all aspects of the 2021 Synod elections with the aim of learning lessons and making improvements for the future. The ERG would welcome feedback from diocesan offices, candidates and electors which they can then consider in their deliberations.

91. *Miss Debbie Buggs (London)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: What steps were taken in the General Synod elections to ensure that those who were unable for any reason to "drag and drop" were able to vote even if they had provided an email address to their diocese and been sent a link to the voting portal?

*Dr Jacqui Philips replied as Clerk to the Synod:* There was provision in the online election process for diocesan offices to be able to cast votes on behalf of members that were not able to access the online portal. This service was offered during the elections process.

92. *Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: A press release on 26 July, reported on the House of Bishops' meeting of the same day and includes "The Clerk to the Synod addressed the House as to whether it might be necessary for the Synod to

meet more frequently in 2022 or 2023, for reasons including the substantive work arising out of the Emerging Church work.” Could the Clerk to the Synod please outline the envisaged timetable for General Synod to be formally involved in taking forward the Emerging Church work and what role it will be expected to take either as a whole Synod or in “group” work?

*Dr Jacqui Philips replied as Clerk to the Synod:* Under Standing Order 1 of the General Synod Standing Orders, all arrangements for the timing and dates of Synod meetings are done under the direction of the Presidents. No decision has yet been made regarding the possibility of additional meetings of the General Synod in 2022 and 2023 to deal with Emerging Church or any other matters.

Synod’s main role with regards to Emerging Church will be to consider and debate any legislative changes arising from Emerging Church recommendations. A detailed plan for Synodical engagement – legislative or non-legislative – on Emerging Church has not yet been developed.

93. *Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford)* asked the Clerk to the Synod: Why are General Synod members charged corporate rates, often amounting to hundreds of pounds when booking technical equipment (such as PowerPoint projectors and microphones), when they organise fringe meetings in Church House for other Synod members during General Synod sessions?

*Dr Jacqui Philips replied as Clerk to the Synod:* The Corporation of The Church House is a charity established by Charter which uses its income to provide financial support for the National Church Institutions. The Corporation of The Church House charges commercial rates for the use of equipment in its meeting rooms.

If the National Church Institutions were to subsidise the costs of equipment used by Synod members at fringe meetings, the cost of this subsidy would either need to be met from departmental budgets which come out of the Vote 2 levy paid by the dioceses or the subsidy would need to be added on to the Synod Diocesan Re-charge which is paid by dioceses. Either way, the costs of subsidising equipment for fringe meetings would be met by the dioceses and parishes.

## **NATIONAL SOCIETY COUNCIL**

94. *Miss Venessa Pinto (Leicester)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: An answer to a question (Q.98) from Sophie Mitchell (Church of England Youth Council) in July 2020, asking you to explain “how the Church of England plans to engage young people in General Synod and ensure that their voices are heard in the next quinquennium?” you stated that “the National Society agreed to the proposal to transition to an annual gathering for young Anglican adults, retaining the breadth of tradition that CEYC has embraced and continuing to give a voice to young adults in the Church of England. This will be planned by young adults with the intention of exploring lived faith within the Anglican tradition. Representation to General Synod will be drawn from those involved, with a 2-year term of office as is currently the case. General Synod Observers

will also be drawn from this work. Progress on this has been impacted by the current Pandemic but will be picked up again soon.”

In response to your answer (and since the new quinquennium of Synod has started), could you please update Synod if any progress has been made?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler) replied as Chair of the National Society Council:* As part of the ongoing work developing the Church’s vision to be younger and more diverse, we have sought to engage the views of children and young people proactively. 250 young leaders in primary, secondary and further education colleges are now active members of our National Younger Leadership Groups and have been able to contribute directly to the emerging vision. We are delighted that some from this group are hosting the induction sessions for members of Synod on Monday, in partnership with the Archbishop of York Youth Trust. Development of our Younger Leadership Groups will be important to the future work of Synod and we will continue to shape our thinking to ensure the voice of our children and young people is heard actively by Synod.

95. *Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: Bearing in mind that the Armed Forces Bill will be enacted in early 2022 to ensure that no service families are disadvantaged through their military service and that we have a large number of service children in our church schools, what training is being given to the heads and school governors as concerns the new requirement that ‘due regard’ must be shown in responding to applications from service families for example involving in-year admissions, home-to-school transport and SEN support provision?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler) replied as Chair of the National Society Council:* The Armed Forces Covenant was first published in May 2011 and guidance is already available to schools to ensure they offer respect, support and fair treatment to Armed Forces families. The new Bill will place a duty to have due regard to the covenant principles on public bodies responsible for the delivery of functions in housing, education and healthcare. It is expected that The Secretary of State will issue guidance relating to the duties to be imposed, and further guidance will be issued to school at that time.

96. *Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: What is the policy of the Church of England towards people having no specific religious affiliation being represented, with voting rights, on local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education), particularly where the Local Authority is “... recognising secular representation as a ‘belief’ within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 and accurately reflecting the changing nature of religious and non-religious beliefs in current society ...”?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler) replied as Chair of the National Society Council:* The Church of England Education Office has provided guidance examining the representation of groups with philosophical convictions such as Humanism on committee A of SACREs. In 1994 the DfE provided non-statutory guidance on this point which stated that the inclusion of representatives “of belief systems such as humanism, which do not amount to a religion or religious denomination, on committee A of an agreed syllabus conference or group A of a SACRE” would be contrary the Education Act. However, it is

our understanding that the application of human rights law and the law on discrimination in England, specifically in the context of religious education, means that excluding groups such as Humanists from SACREs is likely to be found in contravention of human rights legislation so we do not think that it would be justified to limit membership of SACREs and exclude non-religious representatives such as Humanists in this way.

97. *Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: How much have National Church Institutions paid to Stonewall over the last five years, and for what services?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied as Chair of the National Society Council: One member of the Education Office team attended the Stonewall children and young people day conference in 2019 at a cost of £216. Other than that, the NCIs have not paid anything to Stonewall for any services in the last 5 years.

And for the avoidance of doubt, the Education Office did not commission any work from Stonewall for our publication *Valuing All God's Children* and has not paid Stonewall for any services relating to that or anything else connected to our work.

98. *Mrs Rebecca Hunt (Portsmouth)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: Are the *Valuing All God's Children* Guidelines drafted in consultation with Stonewall now going to be withdrawn in the light of concerns about 1. the way Stonewall has presented the law on gender reassignment and 2. harm caused by the affirmative approach to gender dysphoria in children?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied as Chair of the National Society Council: *Valuing All God's Children* was written and produced by the Education Office, with help from a consultant who works as a member of a diocesan education team. Stonewall were not involved in writing it. We always keep the document under review and in Summer 2019 the list of protected characteristics on page 13, the comments on page 14 and the legal framework section of page 29 (Appendix C) were updated to ensure greater clarity about gender reassignment being a protected characteristic. The recommendation about the curriculum on pages 6 and 27 was broadened to ensure a wide understanding of identity. In the event that the DfE or Government produce any further guidance on how protected characteristics are treated within a school context, we will update our document accordingly.

99. *Mrs Sarah Finch (London)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: Will the National Society Council issue guidance to all Church of England schools that they should not use materials produced by Stonewall, a political campaigning group dedicated to promoting and normalising LGBT values in society, which promote (a) teachings that explicitly contradict the teachings of the Church, founded in Scripture, and (b) partisan political views, the use of which is explicitly prohibited by section 406 of the Education Act of 1996?

*The Bishop of Durham (Rt Revd Paul Butler)* replied as Chair of the National Society Council: It is for school governing bodies to decide which resources they use and which organisations they want to work with, not least because schools operate in a variety of

different contexts. Schools have both the expertise and knowledge that makes them best placed to make these decisions. The National Society encourages schools to ensure any resources or external providers have a proven track record, come recommended by someone they trust and are sensitive to the ethos of Church schools.

Schools can use the DfE's guidance and must consider the statutory guidance, which sets out clear advice on choosing resources. The Church of England Charter for Relationships and Sex Education also sets out helpful guidance for schools in this area.

## **CHURCH BUILDINGS COUNCIL**

100. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Given the projected effects of climate change on sea levels and the likelihood of extreme weather events, what steps are the Church Buildings Council taking to provide advice to local churches to help them address the new and increased threats to many of our church buildings that are beginning to emerge?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Combining DEFRA data with Church Heritage Record data, we now better understand flood risk (see the answer to Newton 049). There is also a range of other climate risks such as higher winds causing stonework damage, and warm, damp weather bringing new moulds and pests. These risks are all set out, alongside the corresponding resilience actions and links to guidance, in the new webpage co-developed with the Diocese of Leeds.

We are funding the Diocese of Leeds to develop and deliver training for other dioceses on climate resilience, which will be launched in 2022. We have also partnered with the Tyndall Centre to secure funding for a researcher for a year, who will gather and share case studies of successful adaptation. This will help show what is possible, both to protect our buildings and also for the church to act as a sanctuary for climate-affected communities.

101. *Revd Ruth Newton (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Extreme weather events will damage our buildings and our communities more and more over the coming years. How many of our churches and cathedrals are at risk of flooding, and what can the church do to support them to be more resilient?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Combining DEFRA data with Church Heritage Record (CHR) data, we know over 2300 of our churches and 12 cathedrals are within the 100m radius of a flood zone.

Of these, >1000 churches and 5 cathedrals are within 10m, with the majority in the flood zone therefore at substantially increased risk of flooding. We are working to create regularly updated map layers in the CHR to allow access to this data.

In the past, the Church has focused more on mitigation (reducing emissions) than on adaptation (responding to climate impacts) but this is changing:

- Working with the Diocese of Leeds, we have a new “Climate Resilient Church” area on our website
- The Diocese of Leeds is being funded to deliver training for other dioceses on climate resilience

We have partnered with the Tyndall Centre to secure funding for a researcher, gathering and sharing case studies of successful adaptation.

102. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: What steps are being taken by the Church of England to secure clarity from the Government by way of new legislation on whether it is lawful for a parish council to contribute towards the expenses of providing or maintaining a churchyard?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Our clear and considered opinion is that it is legal and we have issued guidance on this: [https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/CCB\\_Local-Authority-Investment-in-Church-Buildings-Guidance.pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-02/CCB_Local-Authority-Investment-in-Church-Buildings-Guidance.pdf).

The ambiguity that has prevented some Parish Councils from providing funding arises from differing interpretations of the Localism Act. This can only be resolved through government action. The Taylor Review of Cathedral and Church Sustainability identified this as a need in 2017:

“Repeal or the issue of guidance should clarify that certain parish councils are also able to fund church buildings using powers contained in the Localism Act 2011.”

We are advocating for this clarification to be made as part of the current work on the new Planning Bill and are liaising with the relevant government bodies to achieve this.

103. *Revd Canon Kevin Goss (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: How many churches have been materially affected by the presence of bats in the building in the past year, and also how many churches have been forced to close either temporarily or permanently as a result?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: We do not have centrally held data on how many churches have been materially affected by bats and bat presence alone does not mean the church is materially affected. There is a current Bats in Churches citizen science project to gather some of this data. To date volunteers have surveyed more than 200 churches.

The Bats in Churches project has funded capital works at 33 churches materially affected by bats. All of these projects are complete bar one which will complete mid-November 2021.

No churches have been forced to formally close because of bats.

Across the project, 3 of the 108 focus churches were temporarily and unofficially closed when project started because of bats among other factors. Of these churches, Radstone

has now re-opened and will be re-dedicated on December 12, Lamorran will re-open at a date tbc, and we are working with All Hallows Dean to re-open.

104. *Revd Canon Kevin Goss (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: What is the progress on the current bats in churches project, detailing the funding received from central government to help mitigate the effects of bats in churches in the past year, and what government funding will be available in the coming year and whether this is sufficient to manage the problem of bats in churches?

*Ven. Robert Cooper (Durham)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: The Bats in Churches project has £4.8m of National Lottery Heritage Fund and partnership funding over a five-year period, to 2023. There is no central government funding but Natural England, a government arm's length body, has made significant financial contributions.

The project supports churches by enabling church communities to understand their bats so they can plan work effectively; capital works projects; and building skills of church communities in conservation cleaning.

The project has funded capital works in 33 churches. All of these projects are complete bar one which is on track for completion mid-November 2021.

Speaking about the project, one churchwarden said: 'We had no hope before and were becoming despondent. This is the first time somebody seems to be caring about our situation. All we want is someone to assist and enable us both to live well together, side by side.'

## **COUNCIL FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

105. *Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TEs)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: At the July 2021 meeting of Synod, the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity was asked about the ecumenical impact of the non-pandemic related decision in 2020 to limit consecrations in the Church of England to only three consecrating bishops – not only in terms of restricting the laying on of hands by bishops from the Anglican Communion – but also the ecumenical impact on relations with the Old Catholics, the Mar Thoma Church of South India, and Porvoo Churches. The Chair replied 'The Council for Christian Unity has not had these discussions so far. A review of arrangements for consecrations is currently taking place and will take ecumenical aspects into consideration.' Would the Chair update Synod on this review and in particular what conclusions have been reached as a result of taking 'ecumenical aspects into consideration'?

*The Bishop of Chichester (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth)* replied as Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: The review of arrangements is ongoing, and recommendations will be published in due course.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

106. *Mr Richard Denno (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the Finance Committee: What guidance is given to Dioceses regarding use of funds arising from the sale of church buildings or land?

*Mr Carl Hughes (Southwark)* replied on behalf of the Chair of the Finance Committee: The permitted uses of funds from the sale of Church property including Churches no longer required for public worship, clergy housing and investment property and land are set out in various Measures (e.g. the Church Property Measure 2018 and the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011) and in charity law. The Legal Office and the Commissioners' Pastoral and Closed Churches offer general guidance and training for diocesan teams. Dioceses also take their own local legal advice as needed.

In 2020 and 2021 the Pastoral and Closed Churches Team has worked with the NCIs' Finance Team and one of my Finance Committee members to deliver several workshops to diocesan staff on issues around this subject. This has included guidance on the most efficient process for such sales to maximise options for the use of funds and a discussion on the total return approach for Diocesan Stipend Funds.

## MINISTRY COUNCIL

107. *Dr Felicity Cooke (Ely)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What are the figures for the cohort of ordinands which began training this September (2021) by gender, and in 5-year age bands, when separated into the three different modes of ordination training: full-time residential, mixed mode and part time?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich* replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:

Age	Full-time residential		Full-time non-residential		Part-time course	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
20-24	14	7	4	3		
25-29	20	12	8	7		3
30-34	22	10	16	11	4	6
35-39	11	6	7	12	8	7
40-44	7	4	7	16	8	21
45-49	2	3	5	16	20	18
50-54		3	3	3	18	33
55-59	1		1	3	11	33
60-64				1	15	19
65-69					1	8
Totals	77	45	51	72	85	148

108. *Dr Felicity Cooke (Ely)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Are all dioceses offering and promoting clearly the Family Friendly Policies agreed by Ministry Division?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* We do not know, as policies are set by individual dioceses. The policies referred to are on the Church of England website and recommend a minimum level of provision that should apply in all cases whether or not someone is legally eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay. The content of the policies remains a matter for diocesan discretion, but there is an expectation that they should be followed. DDOs play a part in ensuring this, as does including maternity provision in the pooling of training costs. Dioceses are encouraged to take a flexible and generous approach to support clergy and ordinands who become parents, in such a way that they will be able to resume ministry or ministry training when they are ready to. Support at this time is a valuable investment in someone's future ministry.

109. *Revd Mark Bennet (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: In each of the last five years how many faculties have been issued for ordination under Canon C4.5 and how many applications have been refused? Please give separately the numbers for men and women.

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* This data is not centrally captured in the form in which it has been requested and is not therefore readily available within the timescale of this session of Synod.

110. *Revd Mark Bennet (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: In the same period and with the same analysis how many serving clergy have remarried following a divorce or have married a person who is divorced in circumstances where there is a former spouse still living, and how many of these have been inhibited in any way from exercising their existing ministry?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* This data is held in individual dioceses and has not been collected nationally and so is not readily available.

111. *Revd Dr Sean Doherty (Universities & TEs)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Thank you for the update provided in GS Misc 1303 to Synod as to the progress of the Resourcing Ministerial Formation Review and in particular the welcome proposal for reclaiming unspent block grants. What are the next steps for the work of the review group, and from when might we expect possible changes to take effect?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich replied as Chair of the Ministry Council:* The next steps for the Review are the development of detailed proposals in line with the intentions set out in GS Misc 1303, including the modelling of the effect the proposals would have on dioceses and TEs. This will lead to a request for formal approval of the proposals, including full Synodical discussion of them. As part of the development work there will be further consultation with dioceses and TEs. We hope to be able to undertake this work in time for at least some of the proposals to be implemented from autumn 2023. We believe the proposals will mean money is better used to support the formation of both ordained and lay ministers, so we are keen not to delay their introduction unnecessarily.

112. *Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Given the reductions in stipendiary posts around the dioceses, can Ministry Council report whether any analysis has been done on the number of current stipendiary curates unlikely to find a post of first responsibility, and if the analysis has been done, what percentage this represents of those currently seeking such positions?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: Members of the National Ministry Team are currently undertaking this analysis and are in regular contact with dioceses on this issue. Because posts of first responsibility can begin at any point in the year and often rely on a decision to move by the previous incumbent, it is difficult to be certain on specific numbers/proportion. More broadly, we recognise that it is vital that we are able to continue to have strong numbers of ordinands entering training and formation, and that we then retain and support the clergy to serve the mission to which God calls the Church, including through the aspirations of the Vision and Strategy. Proposals are now in development, subject to governance processes, to secure funding to assist wherever possible in maintaining capacity for posts of first responsibility so clergy can be deployed in roles where they can flourish and will contribute to the realisation of the Vision and Strategy.

113. *Revd Canon Andrew Cornes (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: It is enormously encouraging to hear of the increased numbers offering for, and being recommended for, ordination training. It is, however, equally concerning to hear of Dioceses cutting back, for financial reasons, on title posts and on incumbencies. What steps are being taken to ensure that all those finishing ordination training will have curacies to go to, and all those completing their curacies will have incumbencies or other suitable posts?

*The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seeley)* replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: Similarly, we believe that the increase in ordinand numbers is an immense blessing and encouragement to the whole church, and we give thanks to God for this. We trust that our responses to Questions 018, 064 and 119 adequately address your concerns.

## **MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL**

114. *Mrs Rebecca Hunt (Portsmouth)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Given the recently published FOI request showing that 1 in 17 women using DIY home abortion pills are being admitted to hospital with medical complications, will the Mission and Public Affairs Committee change its position that the policy (of pills-by-post DIY Abortion) end when the temporary provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 expire and call on the government to end the policy immediately?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: The 'Consultation on home use of both pills for early medical abortion up to ten weeks gestation' did not address the ethics of abortion, but focused on issues of safety in the context of women attending clinics during the COVID-19 pandemic with associated risks of infection to both clients and staff. In its submission to the

consultation, MPA highlighted a range of risks associated with mifepristone and misoprostol and argued that they were likely to be higher than RCOG estimates suggested. Accordingly, the submission proposed a latest possible date of March 2022 for ending the temporary provisions. In the light of the effects of the vaccination programme, relative risks ought to be re-evaluated and we shall seek to see if such a re-evaluation is being conducted.

115. *Miss Debbie Buggs (London)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: In April 2021 General Synod called on the Government to strengthen its commitment to protecting the freedom of religion or belief for all in its foreign, international development, defence and trade policy. Following the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in August 2021, what steps have been taken by the committee (or others) to urge the Government to protect LGBT+ people and religious minorities including Christian converts (who are viewed as apostates by the Taliban and therefore deserving of death) and to help them find safety abroad including permanent resettlement in the UK?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: The Bishop of Worcester has raised these concerns directly with relevant Ministers in the House of Lords. The Bishop of Leeds alongside religious leaders from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the Methodist Conference and the Church of Scotland have also written privately to the Foreign Secretary on this matter. MPA staff also assisted in the drafting of a wider civil society letter to the Foreign Secretary that was signed by the Bishop of Truro. Despite the assurances given by the Taliban, the situation facing women, girls and minority groups remains perilous and uncertain. Further consideration needs to be given by the government and the wider international community as to the steps necessary to ensure the protection of these groups, including where necessary their resettlement outside Afghanistan, whether that be in the UK or in another country that can provide safe and permanent resettlement.

116. *Mrs Sarah Finch (London)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Following the Government's announcement that the UK will host a Ministerial Meeting in London in July 2022 on the subject of Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), what steps is the Council taking to support the call from Fiona Bruce MP, the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB, for participation by UK Civil Society, and specifically by the Church of England as part of this community, in this global conference?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: MPAC staff have been involved in the three previous international Ministerial meetings on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) and are in regular contact with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office as to the preparation for the London Ministerial in July 2022. Staff are also working with and through the UK FoRB Forum to ensure the active participation of expert civil society organisations and religious and belief bodies in this event. The Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB attends the monthly meetings of the UK FoRB Forum.

117. *Revd Leslie Siu (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What progress has been made on the future work listed in GS2197 with regards

to continued engagement with government and raising awareness of Freedom of Religious Belief across the Church?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith) replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* Many conversations and discussions with government, the Civil Service and others, involve the encouragement of greater religious literacy. That is part of our on-going engagement below the radar. We are proactively promoting Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB) through a government-funded partnership with Oxford University, the FoRB Leadership Network. This is a major and project, active in a number of countries. I must also pay tribute to the work of the Bishop of Truro and his work with the government in this international field. More information on all this work is available on request. Domestically, our work is more “slow-burn” as we follow cases through the legal system where a FoRB element is present and seek ways to counter the misrepresentation of religious belief and its manifestations, and to challenge the secular assumption that religion belongs solely in the private realm.

118. *Mr Benjamin John (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Which individuals and organisations are the Mission and Public Affairs Committee consulting with to determine its own policy and response to the government’s consultation on conversion therapy regarding what any legislation banning so-called conversion therapy should look like?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith) replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* The Church of England’s policy on Conversion Therapy follows from the General Synod vote of July 2017 which commits us to support a ban on this practice. We have therefore had no further consultation with individuals or organisations on that policy. The Government’s consultation on Conversion Therapy was launched on the 30th October and we have not yet examined it in detail. Our response will judge how far the Government’s recommendations are likely to achieve a really effective ban on these practices whilst avoiding the infringement of basic human rights.

119. *Dr Julie Maxwell (Winchester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Will the Mission and Public Affairs Committee, in its response to the consultation on conversion therapy, urge the government to protect ordinary and exploratory pastoral and therapeutic practices for those (especially children) who are questioning their sexuality and/or gender identity?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith) replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:* The consultation on Conversion Therapy was launched by the Government Equalities Office at the end of October and neither staff nor the MPA Council have yet had time to examine it in detail. The views of MPA Council members will be sought as part of the process of responding. The GEO has had the difficult task of defining Conversion Therapy in ways which capture the government’s commitment (shared by the church) to ban such practices, whilst avoiding the infringement of basic human rights or introducing a “chill factor” which might prevent people, including children, getting the support they need. We will assess how well the GEO has managed this task when we draw up a response to the consultation document.

120. *Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Was the Church of England approached by the Government Equalities Office as part of their pre-consultation on the government's proposals to ban conversion therapy, and if so, what did the Church of England recommend to Government about their proposals?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: There have been two conversations between officials of the Government Equalities Office and staff of the NCIs concerning the consultation on Conversion Therapy. The first was to appraise the church of the likely terms of the consultation and the second was immediately prior to the consultation's launch to give us a heads-up on the launch, the general approach adopted by the Government, and the time frame for responses. The position of the Church of England was already known to GEO officials as they were fully aware of the Synod vote to ban conversion therapies.

121. *The Revd Canon Smitha Prasadam (Europe)* asked the Chair of the Finance Committee: What representations were made to Her Majesty's Government prior to the new approach of registering marriages being adopted?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: MPA and Legal Office staff spent some two years in dialogue with the General Register Office on this matter. It began in response to Parliament's call, which I and the then Second Estates Commissioner strongly supported, to include mothers' names on certificates and registers. Enacting this decision created an opportunity for the GRO to move toward a digitised system for all registrations, but as the technology was not ready, an interim solution had to be found which would work for weddings in all contexts. In the course of sometimes difficult and protracted negotiations, the GRO made many amendments to their initial proposals as a result of our interventions, and told us that the church's role in framing the new system had been crucial. The new system is not perfect – but neither was the old one – and we believe we have arrived at the best compromise that was on the table.

122. *Dr Cathy Rhodes (Sheffield)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: As a new Synod member, concerned about climate and nature, how can I engage and make a difference?

*The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Climate and nature are high on the agenda of church and society. They are likely to come before Synod regularly, so Synod members can engage fully in the processes of Synod – questions, motions, debates, votes. In 2022, Synod will debate revisions to the faculty rules to enable net zero, and the "Routemap to Net Zero Carbon by 2030" (see GS Misc 1299).

There is a special interest group, the General Synod Environment Group (GSEG), which is open to any member of Synod and which you can join here: <https://bit.ly/JoinGSEnvGroup>. There is a Steering Group for GSEG which you may wish to join.

The national Environment Working Group supports the church's Environment Programme and usually has two members of Synod as members of the group.

And finally, take what has been discussed and agreed at Synod back home so that everyone in the Diocese can also engage and make a difference.

## **BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

123. *Mr John Brydon (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: The use of abbreviations in Synod papers is widespread. Can all future papers contain a list at the end of all abbreviations used and their meaning?

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford)* replied as Chair of the General Synod Business Committee: The Business Committee does encourage all those preparing papers for General Synod to keep the number of abbreviations used in them to a minimum. Where abbreviations are used, we would expect them to be explained in the main body of the text as they occur. We will repeat this request to all those preparing paperwork for future groups of sessions.

124. *Mr Christopher Blunt (Chester)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Who made and who can change the decision (communicated by email from Synod support, 21/10/21) that clergy are "required" to wear convocation robes at the inauguration of the new Synod?

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford)* replied as Chair of the Business Committee: When the Convocations of Canterbury and York are called together, as they are when a new General Synod is inaugurated, and when they formally meet, Convocation dress is worn unless the President of the Convocation dispenses with the wearing of robes. As a matter of practice, the Presidents now routinely dispense with the wearing of Convocation robes except for the most formal occasions such as the inauguration and the formal presentation of Loyal Addresses to the Sovereign.

125. *Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: Recognising that COVID-19 has not gone away and that the whole Synod is meeting in person the first time for a considerable length of time and the danger that COVID-19 may not leave these shores for a number of years, will he now consider implementing the answer given to me that mechanisms will now be put in place to enable Synod to be operational both In Person and Hybrid for those who are still reluctant to attend in person because of health reasons or there is another partial Lockdown or growth in COVID-19 cases?

*Canon Robert Hammond (Chelmsford)* replied as Chair of the General Synod Business Committee: The Business Committee did consider at its last meeting the possibility of Synod meeting on a hybrid basis in the future and decided not to have hybrid groups of sessions. Noting that unfortunately some members are unable to be at a particular group of sessions, it took the view, that Synod operates better when conducted face to face as in person meetings are more conducive to good debate, deliberation, discussion and fellowship. The current Business Committee has no plans to reconsider this decision.

## DIOCESES COMMISSION

126. *Dr Richard Mantle (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Dioceses Commission: Has the Dioceses Commission received proposals for filling the Provincial Episcopal Visitor (PEV) sees of Ebbsfleet (currently vacant) and Beverley (to become vacant in February 2022) and been informed of what the timetable for filling those sees is likely to be?

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission: The Commission has not yet received any submission to fill the Sees of Beverley or Ebbsfleet. However, I understand that the Archbishop of York is to make a submission regarding Beverley for consideration at the Commission's December meeting and the Archbishop of Canterbury a submission regarding Ebbsfleet for consideration at the March meeting. The timetable for filling those sees is a matter for the relevant Archbishop.

127. *Mr Andrew Orange (Winchester)* asked the Chair of the Dioceses Commission: Given the financial strains placed on the Church of England as a consequence of the recent lockdowns, has the Council considered a possible reorganisation of the diocesan structure, either reducing the number of dioceses or capping diocesan spend, with a view to guarding the funds available (directly or indirectly) for sustaining worship at parish level?

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission: The Dioceses Commission as a Commission of the General Synod is governed by the 2007 Dioceses Mission and Pastoral Measure. It is required to keep under review the provincial and diocesan boundaries, consider the need for suffragan appointments, and encourage shared administrative support across the dioceses.

The Commission is aware of the pressures on the Church at all levels following the Covid pandemic but has no power to cap diocesan spending.

The Commission has received no instruction from the archbishops or diocesan bishops to start developing schemes. Currently, no proposals for boundary reorganisation or for closer diocesan administrative working together have been received from dioceses.

The Commission continues to monitor the Emerging Church workstreams and has been invited to engage informally with the Transforming Effectiveness team, who are seeking to encourage dioceses to share administrative functions. The other workstreams are yet to ask for input from the Commission.

128. *Revd Canon Martyn Taylor (Lincoln)* asked the Chair of the Dioceses: Has any work been done by the Inter Diocesan Generosity Group, the Dioceses Commission, or any other group, by way of reviewing the impact on pooled historic resources in the creation of Leeds Diocese?

*Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn)* replied as Vice-Chair of the Dioceses Commission: The Dioceses Commission published the lessons learned review of the process to create the Dioceses of Leeds in July 2021, and it is available on the Dioceses Commission area of

the Church of England website. The Dioceses Commission continues to keep the resourcing of dioceses under review and encourages dioceses to develop closer working relationships with their neighbours. The Commission looks forward to receiving further proposals for closer working schemes from the dioceses, which will enable mutual generosity and the Church's ministry and mission to flourish.

## **FAITH AND ORDER COMMISSION**

129. *Revd Marcus Walker (London)* asked the Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: Has any report been prepared or is being considered into the theological, ecclesiological, and doctrinal consequences of certain dioceses moving to a minster model of ministry?

*The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth)* replied as Chair of the Faith and Order Commission: FAOC has not being asked to undertake any formal work specifically on the minster model, though wider work on missional ecclesiology is taking place in a variety of ways and may feed into local reflection on shaping ministry and mission. Some individual dioceses considering the minster model of ministry have themselves, locally, undertaken a process of discernment and reflection as they move towards this model.

## **LEGAL ADVISORY COMMISSION**

130. *Revd Chris Moore (Hereford)* asked the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission: The Commission's updated eighth edition of the Legal Opinions in 2007 stated, "8. Section 214(6) and (8) of the Local Government Act 1972 enables ... parish councils ... defined in the section as burial authorities to contribute towards the expenses of providing or maintaining a churchyard ... (This replaces the former provision in the Parish Councils Act 1957, s.10.)".

In December 2019, the county association for parish councils in Herefordshire advised councils who were contributing towards the cost of maintenance of open churchyards that: "NALC's [National Association of Local Councils] View, as sent out to you all in 2018, is that this would be an unlawful expenditure and your Parish council could be at risk of a costly Judicial Review challenge."

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor)* replied as Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission: The Legal Advisory Commission will be reconstituted from the beginning of 2022 and this is work which it might consider undertaking. However, as explained by the Church Buildings Council in the answer to question 111, it is considered that Government action is needed to resolve this issue. The Cathedral and Church Buildings Division is advocating for the necessary clarification to be made in the course of work on the new Planning Bill and are liaising with the relevant bodies.

131. *Mr Charles Houston (Hereford)* asked the Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission: The Burial Laws Amendment Act 1880 s.1 provides that every parishioner has the right to be buried in the parish churchyard without any service whatsoever. The Open Spaces

Act 1906 section 10 provides that a parish council may maintain a burial ground: section 6 refers to disused burial grounds.

Section 20 states: The expression “burial ground” includes any churchyard, cemetery, or other ground, whether consecrated or not, which has been at any time set apart for the purpose of interment:

The expression “disused burial ground” means any burial ground which is no longer used for interments, whether or not the ground has been partially or wholly closed for burials under the provisions of a statute or Order in Council:

Please can the Commission publish an opinion, as it has with the Local Government Act 1972, on the relevance of the Open Spaces Act 1906 as a means of assisting a PCC in the cost of maintaining an open churchyard?

*Rt Worshipful Morag Ellis QC (Dean of the Arches and Auditor) replied as Chair of the Legal Advisory Commission:* The Legal Advisory Commission will be reconstituted from the beginning of 2022 and this is work which it could consider undertaking.

## **LITURGICAL COMMISSION**

132. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Liturgical Commission: At the virtual meeting of Synod members in July 2020 the Bishop of Exeter said, “The impact of the pandemic and churches being closed for public worship have indicated the need for further theological work on Holy Communion.” Is the needed theological work being done?

*The Bishop of Lichfield (Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave) replied as Vice-Chair of the Liturgical Commission:* As previously reported, a Working Group has been invited by the House of Bishops to engage in a programme of theological and liturgical investigation of various issues related to the sacrament of Holy Communion. A considerable amount of time has been invested in resourcing the House’s discussions of the administration of the sacrament; and a study day was also organised for all serving bishops last October. The Working Group is looking forward to further work on other issues raised by the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as contributing to other work by other bodies on Holy Communion within the life of the Church of England. The Group looks forward to publishing some of the fruits of its labours in due course.

*The Chair:* Now we move to closing worship which will be led by the Chaplain. At the end of the worship the Archbishop of Canterbury will dismiss us with a blessing.

*Revd Michael Gisbourne (Chaplain to the General Synod)* led the Synod in an act of worship.

## **Full Synod: Second Day Wednesday 17 November 2021**

THE CHAIR *Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield)* took the Chair at 9 am.

### **WORSHIP**

*The Community of St Anselm* led the Synod in an act of worship.

*The Chair:* Good morning, Synod. I trust you slept well. A couple of little reminders as we start another busy day together. May I encourage members who wish to speak to remember that these microphones move up and down, and to adjust them when you arrive so they are the right height for you. Also, there are a lot of us, and we have lots of debris, so could I remind you to keep everything tucked under your chair so that nobody falls over things as we are moving in and out during our business together here today.

### **ITEM 7**

#### **LOYAL ADDRESS**

*The Chair:* We come to Item 7, the Loyal Address. Members will need Notice Paper IV for this. I invite the Archbishop to speak. You have up to ten minutes.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* Thank you very much. Let's have eight minutes' silence then!

This is the draft text of the Loyal Address which is proposed should be submitted on behalf of the General Synod to Her Majesty The Queen.

I will make two very slight amendments which I understand we have to approve as amendments, for some reason. We probably do not need to go into the reasons; they are very, very technical and small. I shall read it.

"We your Majesty's faithful subjects, the Archbishops, Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the Church of England, together with the representatives of other Churches, assembled in General Synod, wish to assure your Majesty of our loyal and devoted service to your Majesty's Throne and Person.

We offer our heartfelt thanks to your Majesty for your gracious address to us on the occasion of the inauguration of the Eleventh General Synod of the Church of England, on Tuesday 16 November 2021. We express our grateful thanks also to the Earl of Wessex for kindly representing your Majesty at the opening service for the General Synod at Westminster Abbey and at the opening ceremony in Church House.

We express our deep appreciation of the address you gave us, and of the example of Christian service which you have so steadfastly given the nation and the Commonwealth. As we face the challenges ahead of us, we are heartened to know that we have your encouragement and good wishes.

We assure you of our prayers for your continuing health and wellbeing, and for that of your family.

We pledge ourselves in all that we do to seek the strengthening of Christ's Church and advance the coming of His Kingdom. We pray that His blessing will remain upon you and all members of the Royal Family now and always."

I beg to move that this Loyal Address be presented to Her Majesty The Queen.

*The Chair:* I see that no member is indicating that they wish to speak, so I now put Item 7 to the vote by a show of hands.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

**ITEM 8  
SPECIAL AGENDA IV  
DIOCESAN SYNOD MOTIONS  
THE WEALTH GAP BETWEEN THE RICH AND POOR (GS 2710A AND  
GS 2170B)**

*The Chair:* We now come to Item 8. Members will need GS 2170A and GS 2170B. To begin, I invite Revd Canon Paul Cartwright to speak to Item 8. You may speak for up to ten minutes.

*Revd Canon Paul Cartwright (Leeds):* Chair, it is a joy to be able to address you and bring to the business of Synod the first Diocesan Synod Motion of this newly inaugurated General Synod. It is a motion that began its journey to this place from the Deanery Synod of Inner Bradford in October 2017, and is a great example of how synodical processes within our Church can be used to help shape the social policy of our country, and to tackle social injustice.

The last Synod considered the first part of the work that was conducted in Bradford in the motion Through His Poverty, and today we are considering wealth and what it means to be at either end of the wealth spectrum. I am not talking about corporate bodies or organisations that are asset rich, although no doubt we all have views on that; I am talking about real people.

Today I want you to think about an individual's wealth and how often there is a gap between the rich and the poor which can lead to disadvantage on many levels. Just take a second to look around those who you are sat next to, perhaps think about those who you sit alongside at home, think about the opportunities that you have been given in your own life and what has led to them. I wonder have you ever been in the right place at the right time to be given a wonderful opportunity, or maybe, for whatever reason, you wish that you had been given the same opportunity as someone else that you know but it never happened.

We are helpfully reminded in our background paper GS 2170B that wealth is usually associated with assets, including savings, other financial assets, housing equity and pension rights, but, of course, it can be much more than this and it can include pay inequality and pay differentials. I am not talking about the difference between the north and the south today because property is so much more expensive down this end of the country than where I live.

One standardised way we can measure these inequalities is through income inequality. Our society already recognises that this can be problematic, especially when not all the family in a household are employed and the main earner is on a low wage.

This week alone we have seen celebrations that more than 300,000 workers are set to receive a pay rise after higher rates were announced for the real Living Wage. Of course, it is a voluntary scheme and involves almost 9,000 employers paying over and above the national living wage. Our very own Archbishop was quoted in the press as saying the principle behind the campaign for better pay and secure working conditions ought to be a pillar of our new society.

But, sadly, it is not. This is a simple scheme that employers can opt into, but at this time only 9,000 have done so. It is a social policy which is being led by employers. It equates to approximately £16 a week extra outside London and £8 inside London, for a 40-hour week. As you are no doubt acutely aware, day-to-day bills are increasing. Inflation was reported today at a 4.2% increase over the last 12 months. Disposable income is decreasing for our poorer families. Overall, income inequality is high compared to other countries, but we must say that since 1980, over the past 30 years, the gap has remained fairly static (that is if we discount the increases seen by the richest in society). Wealth, on the other hand, is even more unevenly distributed than income and has risen since the 1980s.

Chair, our paper GS 2170B tells us that the wealthiest 0.1% own as much wealth as the poorest 50%. Let me say that again. The wealthiest 0.1% own as much wealth as the poorest 50%. Britain is highly unequal.

So what does it mean in real terms? I am going to tell you about the parish of Grimethorpe, famous for its band, for its closure of the pits, and one of my parishes. There it means that 23.8% of children are living in poverty, 22.8% of pensioners are living in poverty and 18% of working-age people are living in poverty. There are another 587 parishes under us out of the total, which is 12,382. 40.7% in the parish have no qualifications, and both men and women can expect, on average, to live 17 years less than the average life expectancy. The impact of inequality can be seen in relation to health and social problems, with the poorest in society being unable to access speedy private healthcare, to give just one example.

Analysis by the YMCA following the recent cut in universal credit by £20 a week on 6 October has shown that a 19-year-old in one-bedroomed private accommodation, working 24 hours a week on the minimum wage, will be left with just £51 for the month after covering rent, bills and essentials. This cannot be right in 2021, and especially when

we hear today's news about that 4.2% rise in inflation over the last 12 months. Bills are rising.

The Institute for Public Policy Research says that one in six working households are living in poverty and more than 30% of couple households with one full-time earner are in poverty. Disability significantly increases someone's chances of falling into poverty due to extra living costs, care costs, difficulty in finding suitable work, and, if you are from a global majority background, you are more likely to face a high poverty rate in the UK, with 46% of the children from those households experiencing poverty compared to 30% of all other children.

There are many drivers of poverty which include life events such as illness or redundancy, but most are structural and amplified by increased living costs, such as the period of time that we are in at the moment. This keeps perpetuating the downward cycle of poverty, making it harder for people to access training and education which may assist in lifting people out of poverty.

Covid, though, has helped us to see the worth of carers and cleaners who work in lower-paid roles. They became our heroes and we were grateful for their contribution. We went and gave them applause on our doorsteps, along with the NHS.

Parishes are stepping up to provide food and warmth in colder months. It is not unique to Yorkshire; there are other parishes such as those in Wigan which are providing low-cost fresh and tinned goods for up to 250 households a week who visit their food clubs.

And all this while others decide to access space travel, ensure that their children receive a tailored education, leave university with a minimal amount of debt, go to the correct educational establishments. Just because of the colour of a tie, doors are opened.

Even during the Covid pandemic those at the top of the wealth tree have disproportionately seen an increase in riches while the same has not happened at the other end of the spectrum.

Please, please do not get me wrong, because who would not exploit such opportunities if they were presented to their family? Maybe some of you here fall into this category. You may even feel uncomfortable or angry at what I have just said, but do not get distracted by these feelings, as it is not a criticism in any way. It is just a statement of fact and experience in the world today. These are just some of the examples of what wealth inequality can lead to. This cannot be right when people do not get the same opportunities: to start a race when you are already 50 metres in front of the start line of the 100-metre dash just because of the opportunities that have been passed on to you.

It would be very easy to make this into a party political debate, but that is not what this motion is about. I want to remind you that over the years I have mentioned at least three political parties have been in power, albeit occasionally jointly.

Sisters and brothers, we are told in Proverbs 31:8-9, "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly;

defend the rights of the poor and needy.” But it is not just the poor that we should worry about because we are told in Matthew 19:24 that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God. Surely we have to call out the dangers of such inequality around wealth that we experience in our country today.

Look around you and think about the advantages you have over your brothers and sisters. Look around you and think about those things that you wish you could have achieved in your life when you feel as though others have been more privileged than you. Let’s remember Timothy 6:17-18, “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.”

Chair, we cannot expect to be able to write fiscal or social policy on behalf of Her Majesty’s Government, or even eradicate the wealth gap. Relative poverty will always exist, that is what the word relative means, but what we can be is that gentle voice that speaks about the injustice of such a gap, a gap which leads to reduced opportunity for so many in our country. We can mirror and hold up that mirror to those who maybe cannot see what is staring them in the face.

I look forward to hearing your comments on the work which has begun in Inner Bradford Deanery and comes to you today through the support of the Diocese of Leeds Synod. Thank you.

*The Chair.* Item 8 is now open for debate. There is an amendment to come on this, but we are going to debate the main motion.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

*Revd Canon John Bavington (Leeds):* This motion was originally discussed, as Paul Cartwright has mentioned, at the Deanery Synod of Inner Bradford of which I am the area dean. It was discussed over four years ago and it is great that it has made it to General Synod this morning. There was enormous strength of feeling in the room at the time, and I can tell you that things have not got better in the last four years. Many of you will know and will have worked in projects of social action of various kinds in the parish. Almost every church in Inner Bradford is running projects to serve the poor, and there are many poor. At the height of the pandemic our own parish project, the Red Letter Project, gave or delivered over 140 food parcels to households every week. The congregations of these parishes are not wealthy yet out of their slim resources they seek to make a difference.

As Paul has mentioned, during the pandemic we have become more aware of the vital and costly role of low-paid workers, particularly in care homes and other social provision, and in supermarkets. Their worth to society has been highlighted but is not communicated to them in financial value. The Old Testament prophets call on us, do they not, and on all those who control wealth and power, to ensure that no one is in need.

I think it was probably Jim Wallis from the Sojourners Community in America where I first heard the illustration many of you may have heard, which is that charitable work among the poor is like pulling drowning people out of the river, but at some point somebody has to go upstream and ask who is pushing them in. What are the structures, systems and policies which cause so many in so wealthy a nation to be so in need?

I urge you to support the motion.

*The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Guli Francis-Dehqani):* I welcome this motion and I support the idea that we call on Government to do more in reducing the wealth gap and addressing the disadvantages that flow from it, but I also want to ask the question what might be we be able to do as the Church to play our part?

I became Lead Bishop for housing in April following the report of the Archbishops' Commission on Housing, Church and Community, which outlines all too clearly how serious the housing crisis is and how devastating its effects are on the poorer and more vulnerable people in our communities.

The Church of England owns approximately 200,000 acres of land across England. Much of it is rural and used for agricultural and other purposes, but there are larger and smaller plots everywhere which may be suitable for development. There are examples of good developments underway or completed. In one diocese, rather than selling off two vacant vicarages to house two families, 40 social homes were built on the site. In another 50 homes are to be built on diocesan and local authority land in an area of acute deprivation. In the Diocese of Chelmsford, which I serve, we are working steadily towards the development of over 200 alms-houses on three sites in deprived areas of East London. In all these examples we are not talking about maximising profit by selling land for executive housing; we are talking about providing affordable homes that people really need.

We now have a geospatial map of all Church of England land and buildings across England, and this can help us think, plan and work strategically in order to identify places suitable for building homes. But the challenge is this: in many places we are still selling, buying or developing land and housing just to make money to keep our show on the road at a time of acute challenge. What if instead we were driven by a vision of God's Kingdom which includes and embraces all people, and is rooted in real, practical expressions of justice, love and service?

July's General Synod passed overwhelmingly a motion which stated that addressing housing need is integral to the mission and ministry of the Church of England, so why are we not doing far more to tackle the housing crisis, and to address the systemic injustice and inequity of our society?

The *Coming Home* Report sets out five core values which describe what good housing should look like. The Archbishop mentioned these in his Presidential Address yesterday. They are that housing should be sustainable, safe, stable, sociable and satisfying. But there is a sixth at the very core of our Christian faith, and that is sacrifice.

The challenge for us is to lead by example; to demonstrate the love of Christ by using our assets to ensure those who are financially poor have homes that they can truly afford. This includes people who are homeless, ex-prisoners, people with disabilities who need good quality supported accommodation, key workers, those on lower incomes, or people in the gypsy, Roma and traveller community with nowhere safe to stay.

I thank the Diocese of Leeds in particular for its theological underpinning of this call for real justice and equity, but it is not enough to ask Government to act if we ourselves cannot, or will not. We worry about our lack of capacity, but really it is a lack of confidence; confidence that God will honour our good actions if, like Peter in the storm on Lake Galilee, we only step out of the safety of our rocking capsizing boat and walk on the water with Jesus. Thank you.

*Revd Tim Goode (Southwark):* I would like to draw Synod's attention to the profoundly damaging two-way relationship that exists between poverty and disability. Poverty and disability magnify each other, contributing significantly to a downward spiral of increased vulnerability, suffering and profound exclusion. Disability is a primary cause of poverty for disabled people all too often come up against physical and cultural barriers that limit full participation in the legal, political, economic and social life of their communities.

These barriers in turn lead to further discrimination, abuse, social marginalisation and isolation, resulting in insufficient access to adequate employment, housing, healthcare and credit. Disabled people often carry additional financial costs. Scope call this the disability price tag, the extra costs that disabled people incur just to be able to function near to that of a non-disabled person. In 2019, the disability price tag stood, on average, at - get this - £583 a month, with one in five disabled people facing extra costs of more than £1,000 a month.

The financial impact on the disabled person and on their immediate family can be devastating. Just as disability is a primary cause of poverty, so poverty can also disable. Poor living conditions due to poor quality social housing and environmental exposures such as pollution, unsafe or unhealthy working environments also lead to health conditions which can and do disable.

Fifty per cent of those living on or below the poverty line are either disabled or live with someone who is disabled, and it is increasingly recognised that we need to address the profound discrimination and injustice around disability if we are ever going to bridge the gap between rich and poor.

Now, of course I really welcome with joy the call for us to be a more diverse church, but that call demands that we put our own house in order if we are to speak with integrity and purpose to those in power. It surely is a win-win. For by becoming a more diverse church, we will find our integrity enhanced, liberating us to better tear down the very cultural and social barriers that are denying the full participation of disabled people within the legal, political, economic and social lives of our communities. Thank you.

*The Chair:* We are now going to take the amendment, which you should be able to see on your Order Paper and, all being well, will be on the screen. I would like to invite

Professor Muriel Robertson to speak to and move the amendment in her name. You have up to five minutes.

*Professor Muriel Robinson (Lincoln):* First, apologies to our fellow Synod members from Leeds that we have not actually managed to talk to you in this rather squashed Synod about this amendment, friendly, and that we are very much in favour of the main motion. So why amend? And I think, to some extent, I would like to thank the Bishop of Chelmsford who has made these arguments as well. In the last quinquennium, the Government can have been in no doubt about this Synod's commitment to social justice. This amendment allows us to make it clear that this new Synod is equally committed in such a way.

It also makes it clear to the rest of the world that we are not asking the Government to act instead of us, rather this both/and. And the choice of words very deliberately draws on the Five Marks of Mission which we are trying to have much more at the forefront of our lives in general and in this Synod.

*The Chair:* Can I ask if Paul Cartwright you are in favour of this amendment. Do you support this amendment?

*Revd Canon Paul Cartwright (Leeds):* Yes, we very much support it, thank you, it is helpful.

*The Chair:* As Canon Cartwright has indicated that he supports the amendment at Item 15, debate on the amendment can continue and a vote on it can be taken.

Item 15, the amendment in the name of Professor Robinson is therefore now open for debate. I call first the Archbishop of York.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* I first of all want to say a huge thank you to Paul Cartwright, to the Bradford Deanery and the Diocese of Leeds for bringing this before us. I entirely support the motion and the amendment for the reasons given, that it shows our willingness to act with Government, for the nation, alongside others to serve the poor.

I wanted to read, very briefly, some words from one of my, and indeed Justin's great predecessors, William Temple, who remains such an inspiration to us in this aspect of our discipleship. He wrote this, and this is the theological vision which underpins this: "My worth is what I am worth to God, and that is a marvellous, great deal, for Christ died for me, thus incidentally what gives to each of us his highest worth gives the same worth to everyone. In all that matters most are we equal". Only of course we are not, and it is shocking to hear and to see the terrible and growing discrepancies between rich and poor across our nation.

I support this motion and this amended motion because it asks us to put our house in order as well as asking the Government. We will be called naïve for this, as we are often called, and let us be undefended in saying yes, we make no apology for having a big vision of the worth of every human being. We make no apology for holding ourselves and

others to account for this scandal which I now see so clearly in the communities that I am now privileged to serve.

And I keep on coming back to Galatians 2:10, if you remember that wonderful little exchange between Peter and Paul in Scripture, you know, Paul, on the whole, is trouncing poor old Peter with his intellect and rhetoric, but Peter says just one thing - remember the poor. The danger is always for us and for our world that we forget the poor. I am proud to support this motion and this really helpful amendment so that the Five Marks of Mission, our own responsibility in these things, is very, very clear.

*The Chair:* After our next speaker, I call the gentleman in the middle there. The speech limit is still five minutes.

*Revd Graham Hamilton (Exeter):* I fully support the amendment urging the church to set the lead rather than just leave it to the Government. Yesterday, Archbishop Angaelos reminded us of how Zacchaeus gladly reduced the wealth gap in response to Christ. We do not know what part of Jesus' message Zacchaeus had previously heard, whether at first hand or by report. Perhaps Zacchaeus knew the rich young ruler who went away sad from Jesus because he could not give away all he possessed. I agree that we should work for more just social structures as we have been urged in this amendment.

But I would remind Synod that we have a Gospel message that challenges the rich directly, that warns them of the peril of their prosperity, and offers them instead an eternal treasure. I heard a sermon recently on holiday in Cornwall which reminded me of this. The brother of Jesus, James, says in Chapter 5, "Come now you rich, weep and howl for the miseries coming upon you, your riches have rotted, your garments are moth-eaten, your gold and silver have corroded, behold the wages of the labourers who mowed your fields which you have held back by fraud are crying out against you".

I hope that we will call on the Government to act, that we will set an example in social action, but I hope above all that we will have in our churches around the country the courage to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to the rich, including a costly call to repentance, of changed living and generous giving, to warn them of the risk of their great wealth, and command them to be generous. I support the amendment.

*The Chair:* After our next speaker I call the Bishop of Leeds, thank you, after which I will test your mind on motion for closure on the amendment and a continue of the debate.

*Dr Nick Land (York):* The Mexican liberation theologian Elsa Tánez makes, I think, a really plausible account for greed to be the overarching structural sin. She talks about the way our own greed, our greed for power, our greed for possessions, our greed for money and for status move together to form a society which is extremely unequal. But I would just want to add to our previous speaker's points, that if we are looking at Marks of Mission that will make the transformational difference to our society, it is surely to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom, because human hearts need to be changed.

Most of us here will honestly admit that greed, that having not just enough but more than enough, is part of our lives. It is something that I certainly would honestly admit, and

slowly God is working within me. And it is only when we can move from greed to generosity, as we discover the generous gift that God has given us in Christ that our hearts can change and that the hearts of our fellow citizens will change, so that they will know the joy of generously giving, so that the gap between rich and poor can be closed.

*The Chair.* I will take one more after the Bishop of Leeds, so please do indicate if you wish to. The Bishop of Leeds, thank you.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* I want to speak of my admiration for clergy and parishes across my diocese and beyond, who, despite a lack of resources in many respects, have committed themselves to serving poor people. I do not like the categorisation of 'the poor', but serving poor people and poor communities because of their obligation to territory, which is the unique Anglican vocation. We do territory.

And it is out of that, that without fear or favour, without selecting favourites or anything like that, I rarely go to a parish now that is not working with food banks or serving poor people, including in some of the more wealthy areas, where poverty takes a different form. Poverty is not uniform and needs, in many ways, to be contextualised. I want to express my admiration for those clergy and parishes that often get knocked or often feel underconfident about the resources at their disposal, but, because of our unique vocation to territory, they plug away at it, and because of the command of the Gospel.

But I also just want to say that that obligation should not be taken for granted, it is not just in the Gospel, it is in who we are as a church and if we cede that obligation, no one else is going to do it for us. So, we bring to this the capacity that we bring as a nation.

Just anecdotally, when I moved after 11 years in London and Surrey and went back up to Bradford ten years ago, I realised that there are different degrees of poverty, and poverty in some of the Bradford outer estates shocked me in a way that I had not been shocked, even down here in London, and I will not waste your time by going into detail on that. I strongly support the motion and the amendment and all that lies beneath it.

*The Chair.* I would now like to test your mind by proposing a motion for closure of the debate on the amendment.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair.* Can I invite Canon Paul Cartwright, if he wishes, to respond to the debate on the amendment.

*Revd Canon Paul Cartwright (Leeds):* No.

The Chair: He does not, and so we now move to a vote on the amendment.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* We now move to continue the debate on this item as amended. Can I call the lady here, followed by the lady in the blue cardigan at the back? Thank you. The speech limit is still currently five minutes.

*Revd Dr Susan Lucas (Chelmsford):* I fully support the motion as amended and thank you to those who have proposed it. Also extremely helpful was the background paper provided, GS 2170B. This alludes to the economic liberalism of Hayek et al, the so-called Chicago School, which has actually been the essential background, the atmosphere if you like, that has led to this great gap between wealth and poverty in this and in other nations since the 1980s.

In particular, that paper says rightly that the view of the Chicago School that distributional incomes are neutral, neither moral or immoral, has actually taken root and has proved extremely difficult to challenge. This is the great alibi of the liberal economic project. Far from moral neutrality, what it actually does is put economic rationality as a moral rationality, reaching, as the political philosopher Wendy Brown puts it, from the funding of public services to the soul of the citizen subject.

Challenging this economic rationality as a moral rationality is a deeply theological task and it is a theological task which has been very well addressed in the academy by the likes of John Millbank, Adrian Pabst, Rowan Williams and others. What it has not done, however, has got a grasp on the public imagination, and I was delighted to hear the Archbishop of York allude to the words of William Temple. I think in this theological task we again need to walk backwards into the future, for in William Temple we did indeed get a vision of a public morality which fired the public imagination.

In my own parish, in my own deanery in East London, it is a little bit different from the Northern Province in which I served for most of my ministry before. What you see in Newham, as elsewhere, is check by jowl. On one street in my parish, for example, there are houses which are gentrifying, which have scaffolding outside because they are being restored, next to houses which are in multiple occupancy street drinking simply because people have nowhere else to go.

My parishes, other parishes in my deanery, do the great work that we have actually heard alluded to in this Synod, in the food clubs, in the community cafes, in the work that actually alleviates some of the worst of the poverty. But there is also an urgent need for a new public imaginary, one which actually puts not the economy but *economia*, the household, at the heart of how we relate to one another as human beings.

That public imaginary is a theological task. I heartily support this motion and would urge us to actually take on board this task and renewing our vocation.

*The Chair:* After our next speaker, I call Andy Salmon.

*Revd Canon Dana Delap (Gloucester):* When I moved to the north Cotswolds in 2014, it was a bit of a shock to the system. I had been in Durham as a prison chaplain and then in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and talking to people in the north Cotswolds about poverty was quite challenging. I have a PCC secretary now, Stephanie Denning, who is a researcher

on the Life on the Breadline project run by Coventry University. They have produced, as part of the conclusion of that work, a most excellent anti-poverty charter. They are asking that churches sign up to this, especially those where poverty is not necessarily seen and recognised. I thoroughly recommend not only supporting this motion, but also looking at the work of Life on the Breadline.

*Revd Canon Andy Salmon (Manchester):* After yesterday's attempt to call me for a maiden speech it is clear that being a bald man with a beard makes me anonymous in this chamber. Apologies about that. I wanted to just draw attention to, I think, three things briefly.

I wanted to support this motion as it seems all of us are doing, but I want to draw your attention to three things. One is the fundamental impact of inequalities on health and Michael Marmot in the Institute of Health Equity has documented many of the cases and has shown clearly, really, the impact of inequalities, economic inequalities, on people's health. And in a recent report, Build Back Fairer in Greater Manchester, he highlights that during Covid the mortality rate in the most deprived decile in Greater Manchester was 2.3 times greater than in the least deprived decile. That means that people are dying and dying younger because of poverty. We have to tackle this issue.

I want to draw your attention to another issue that we have not heard about so far, which is about air quality and transport. It is the case that disproportionately poorer people suffer from poor air quality, and in our cities we have devastatingly poor air quality. That is very true in the city centre of Manchester where I live and work. It is the case that those who drive are disproportionately wealthier than those who breathe the air. Obviously, we all breathe the air, but it is the case that those who are poorer disproportionately are the recipients of that poor quality air and also dependent upon public transport, which is incredibly expensive in our part of the world.

Andy Burnham is tackling this problem and we look forward to the days when Greater Manchester will have a public transport system that is perhaps comparable with that in London, which has had far greater investment over the years. So, we want to see issues like air quality tackled as well.

I just want to draw your attention to one other thing. Over the years one of the fundamental ways that we can tackle problems that are generated by wealth inequality is through our local democracies. Local democracies have a fundamental task of supporting the poor in our communities, and over recent years they have been increasingly undermined and under-resourced. I just wanted to quote for you our City Mayor in Salford, Paul Dennett, who in setting this year's budget points out that Salford City Council will have seen its budget cut by £222 million since 2010/11 as a consequence of cuts to the central government grant and unfunded budget pressures.

The Local Government Association also highlights that councils have seen a £15 billion cumulative cut in Whitehall grants since 2010. Our local councils are an important ally for us in the church and an important way of tackling the problems in our communities and they have been consistently under-resourced and, to be blunt, attacked by national

Government over recent years, and we need to find ways to support and re-resource them as well.

*The Chair:* After our next speaker, because you are passionate about this, I intend to reduce the speech limit to three minutes to give as many of you a chance to speak as possible. Following our next speaker I call David Ashton.

*Revd Preb Dr Amatu Christian-Iwuagwu (London):* I do remember 25 years ago arriving in this country, having come from a family of a civil servant well endowed to look after myself and the family, a proud young man who studied engineering, in the context of Africa was very affluent and ready to survive as the first son of my parents, and arriving at the shores of this country being confronted with culture and racism.

And the level of poverty, as we heard today, if you are UKME, a higher rate of inequality exists. That caused a lot of impact and influence on the way that I perceived and looked at things, and there became poverty of the mind, and poverty as a result of racism.

If you look around here today, left or right, we are talking about a church that needs to be humbler, simpler and also bolder, and, in this chamber today, I wonder how much we have moved in this direction. I do strongly support this motion and this amendment because I have lived out poverty as the result of racism, and beginning again after 25 years to begin to reimagine and begin to develop myself in the ways that we, and ordinary people, would not have done.

Inequality exists and inequality connects a direct correlation between inequality and poverty and racism and therefore we need to look inwards in ourselves to begin to look at racism and inequality as it comes to our church here today.

*Mr David Ashton (Leeds):* I did not intend to speak, but I think I have to admit that I am one of those who have a good pension, who have capital, and I can say that applies to my wife as well.

Every Friday I run a club for the elderly within the area I live, where there is poverty, where they rely on just the State pension, who enjoy coming to be together, who feel that they can be welcomed into a church. We lost two of our members during the Covid. It was not Covid. At the very first meeting that we had when we started to come back together, those people asked for a service of remembrance because they were sorry that they could not be there at the funerals of the friends that they had made on the Friday club. There are many aspects of deprivation. This is one that I know of, and it is one way that I, as a member of the Church of England, not a millionaire but wealthy in the friends I have in the church and the standard of living that I have, that I can give back to those people who do not have, and many a time my heart bleeds when I see them on a Friday.

*Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester):* I just wanted to make two quick points. I think the first speaker in this debate spoke about four years ago, and I think the gap undoubtedly has widened since then. Because of the Covid crisis and the impact that it had on financial markets in March 2020, the central banks, quite correctly, cut interest rates to historically low levels, but although that has boosted the values and we see stock markets at record

levels, what it has also done has widened the gap between the wealthiest and the poorest considerably. I am a financial planner in my day job. This is a view held by many fund managers actually. Several I have listened to recently have made that point about the rising in asset values but widening the general gap.

I completely support the motion today, but I think one thing that I am very keen to get across, so that this does not just become a motion we passed, we send it to the Government, they say "Oh very good" and put it to one side and do not do anything about it, I think we need to hone in on one thing which was mentioned in the briefing paper, and that is the enormous gap in some cases between what the most well-paid person in an institution is paid, or a company, and the lesser paid.

I have just done some calculations. If somebody is earning £10 an hour and they are doing a 40-hour week, that equates to about £20,872 per annum. Now, if you times that by 25, you are looking at about £520,000. If you times it by 30 times, you are looking at over £600,000. I do not think that 25 or 30 times or anything above that is really fair or indeed reasonable. It is not harming the productivity of the company, and it is actually spreading money wider across society. Surely it is morally right that somebody who is earning such a large amount above their poorest-paid staff should keep to the gap? For most of us who run small businesses, the gap is about three or four times.

I really hope that we focus in on this one point and make the moral case, the economic case and the practical case that people should not be earning 100, 200 times more than their lowest-paid staff. That is the sort of thing that this Church and this Synod should be doing. I enthusiastically support the motion, but I hope that we really campaign on that particular point.

*Revd Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Liverpool):* I support this motion, but I would like to invite us and encourage us to refocus on the relative and inequality parts of the motion rather than become distracted, as it seems our debate has, with issues of absolute poverty. I do think, obviously, absolute poverty is incredibly important for us to tackle, but one of the things I most welcomed when I read the background papers for this motion was the emphasis on inequality.

One of the briefing papers mentions Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson's book *The Spirit Level*. Another book that I found very influential several years ago was Alain de Botton's *Status Anxiety*.

I am very grateful to Tim Goode and Andy Salmon for drawing attention in their speeches to the health implications of inequality, because one of the things that I have found most interesting over the last few years through the pages of *New Scientist* has been a repeated link between inequality and stress and between stress and inflammation and that leading to a huge variety of health impacts. Inequality causes, as we have heard, a vicious cycle of health and other economic impacts, and so we end up exacerbating inequality. It seems to me that that biblical principle of Jubilee that is referred to in the background papers is specifically designed to prevent this kind of spiralling accumulation of wealth and poverty, which is what we continually see in our society.

I welcome the amendment with its commitment to transform unjust structures of society, that Mark of Mission which is so important, but we do need to not become too complicit with our, dare I say it, Enneagram 2 enjoyment of helping the poor. I would like us to focus on how important it is for us to minimise inequality, as the last speaker said, and keep things relatively equal - something that in our history as the Church of England we have not got a great track record of.

*The Chair:* After Alex Frost, I call Andrew Gray, and I shall be testing the mind of Synod with a motion for closure after that.

*Revd Alex Frost (Blackburn):* Good morning, Synod. Please forgive my nervousness.

Jesus spoke in parables, and I want to encourage Synod to tell your stories. I am very grateful hearing stories of what people have contributed to Synod this morning.

I was part of a news item that told a story. Within that story, I received lots of calls. The stories I heard from the story I told was that people just did not know. Frankly, middle-class women from Middle England were ringing me up saying, "Is it really like that? Is it really like that?" And I went, "It is. It's really like that".

And so I just want to tell you a story. On Monday night I was invited to a meal, and at the door was a man called Anthony who had one foot missing. Some of us walked past Anthony and we went into the hall and we had a meal, and Anthony invited himself in, and it made us all very, very uncomfortable because we did not like the awkwardness of the poor man.

So I implore you to tell your parable, to tell your story, because not everybody knows. Those people who are living in that very fortunate 0.1 percentile or whatever it was referred to, those people do not know. It is our job as Christians to tell the story, to tell the parable. It is our job to bring the voice of the homeless and those in poverty to people who do not know.

*Mr Andrew Gray (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich):* Synod, in February 2019 I called for the formation of a homeless task force which this Synod unanimously endorsed. That was following the death of some rough sleepers in my then Diocese of Norwich and also in London.

I very much support this debate. I appreciate it is about relative poverty, not necessarily absolute, as the previous speaker said, but I want to build on something that the Bishop of Chelmsford touched upon earlier when she spoke about the fear that the Church sometimes has of actually getting out of the boat, and this is something I have encountered.

Following the February 2019 endorsement of the Homeless Task Force, the Force was set up as part of Mission and Public Affairs and we got busy very quickly talking to homeless charities to find out what would make a difference: "What could the Church do to make a difference?" And the answer was loud and clear - and this is pre the pandemic and post the pandemic. The answer was "We need more supported housing".

So what did we do? We went out and we spoke to pension funds, we spoke to lawyers, we spoke to bankers, we spoke to property experts, and we basically pulled together a coalition of people, a coalition of the willing, who all said that they were happy to give their time and their money to assist.

So how many homeless people have we housed or helped since then? I am afraid the answer is none, and the reason being - and I think this is what the Bishop was touching on - the problem comes when you get down to a diocesan level, because if we are going to be serious about making a difference as a Church then we have to put our money where our mouth is, but unfortunately a number of dioceses simply do not have the capacity or the skills, or the money in many cases, to actually go out and do something.

I will give you a couple of examples. I went and spoke to a particular diocese. I will not name them, but I spoke to a particular diocese and I said, "Right, here we've got this pension fund. They are willing to provide the majority of finance for a housing scheme. Here is the local authority. They will guarantee the rent for a certain amount of time. This is what we can do..." And the diocese, to be honest, they were probably the most honest ones about it, they just said, "We don't know how to do this. Even if you bring in this external help, we just don't know how to do this".

So it is pretty clear to me, and from what the Bishop was saying earlier, that if we are going to make a difference, the Church Commissioners are going to have to step in and help dioceses to do this, whether that is with knowledge, whether it is with underwriting, whether it is with capacity, and possibly even money - although I should add that at the moment on the money markets it is actually very cheap for institutions like the Church to borrow, the Church could actually borrow cheaper than Her Majesty's Government. But until we do that, we are going to have a problem where, when it comes down to the diocesan level, your average diocese is going to say, "Do you know what, we would far rather just sell the land off and if it goes to executive housing so be it, because we are in survival mode", rather than, "It is great for Synod to say this, but we have got our balance sheet to think about".

So that is the point I would like to leave with you really. I will be bringing back something to this Synod about that, but I do believe that if we are going to make a serious difference - and the willingness is there, the money is there, the expertise is there - then, as the Bishop said, if we are going to step out of the boat and start to walk on water, we are going to need the Commissioners to get involved.

*The Chair:* Time is running away with us, Synod, so I am going to propose a motion for closure on this item by a show of hands.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Thank you. The motion for closure is carried. Can I now invite Paul Cartwright to come and respond to the debate should he wish to?

*Revd Canon Paul Cartwright (Leeds):* Thank you, Chair. I am still Paul Cartwright from Leeds. I was Canon Paul yesterday as they had missed off my family name, but there we are.

Thank you so much for those excellent contributions. I think it feels like everyone is pulling in the same direction. There are, as Andrew Gray has just said, some bumps in the road that we need to get over, and we have really got to release the resources, and so, if nothing else comes out of this, I hope that our Church Commissioners and our dioceses have heard that and I hope that the Church Commissioners are able to continue to help our dioceses to realise what is needed.

I am not going to mention people by name - we have sort of got into this back-slapping thing. What I am going to say is thank you so, so much. But I am going to mention Bishop Guli, because I think it was so insightful to step out of a rocking, capsizing boat, and we have got to walk with Jesus. I hate getting wet! As you know, I used to be a police officer, and we always had places where we could keep dry. That is what cops do. I hate getting wet. But, with faith, all that will get wet are the soles of your feet because we will be sustained, it will happen.

Brothers and sisters, we have an opportunity to help shape social policy today. We are an elected body. We are not a parliament, as we have heard, but we are across the road from the Palace of Westminster. A lot of our MPs and Lords in there are doing tremendous work around these issues.

If you have, do not worry about having, that is perfectly fine, that is a gift that has been given to you, but do not put it in the silos for tonight you may die. What I want you to do is to encourage the sharing of things. And I am not saying we have astronomical taxes, do not worry about that, I just want people to do what they can.

We have heard from the Archbishop of York that actually it is possible. We have heard from the Bishop of Leeds that our parishes are doing remarkable work with nothing. With nothing.

I am just going to tell you one story. We have heard a story about Anthony, who went and shared that story, and we have got to tell stories. I am going to tell you a story about Maksuda. It is going to take just a couple of sentences. Maksuda was a persecuted Christian from Pakistan who now has leave to remain, I am pleased to say, and she was walking through Sheffield and saw someone begging on the street. She had £1 in her purse. She took that £1 out and gave it to the person who was begging. She had nothing else. That was all she had to her name. So if someone who is in that poverty can do so much - actually, she gave everything - I am sure we can do something today.

Synod, can I ask you to support this? Would it not be lovely if we had no abstentions and no noes? Would that not be a great message for our society of today? So if I can ask you to support the amended motion which I move in my name. Thank you.

*The Chair:* Point of order, Mr Wilson?

*Mr John Wilson (Lichfield):* Chair, this motion is asking for action by those who meet across the road in another House. It would be good to have an accurate record of the vote. Would you order a count of the Synod, please?

*The Chair:* Yes, I would. Thank you.

*There voted on Item 8: in favour 342, two against with three recorded abstentions.  
The motion was carried.*

*The Chair:* The motion is clearly carried. As we conclude this item, Synod, I just wanted to thank so many of you for getting so involved, particularly our newer members; it is great to have you with us. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Miss Debbie Buggs (London)* took the Chair at 10.39 am.

## **ITEM 9 ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL BUDGET 2022 AND PROPOSALS FOR APPORTIONMENT 2022 (GS 2235)**

*The Chair:* Good morning, Synod. We are now at Item 9 on the Agenda: the Budget and Apportionment. For this you will need paper GS 2235.

At the request of Canon Spence, and using my power as Chair under Standing Order 22(3), I am extending his time allowance for the opening speech from ten minutes to 15 minutes. Further, as Canon Spence is unable to take notes, I would like to make an additional change for which I need your consent, Synod. Canon Spence has asked for the opportunity to reply to the debate after every three speeches. Under Standing Order 21(3), that needs my permission as Chair, which I give, and the general consent of Synod. If, therefore, you consent to Canon Spence speaking more than his permitted normal allocation of speeches, please would you indicate by raising your hand?

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* Thank you. Permission is therefore granted. Canon Spence, please speak to Item 9. You have up to 15 minutes.

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio):* As new members will have gathered, my eyes are not my greatest gift. I do have the great challenge that they disconcertingly move about and follow sound, but please be assured they do not see anything, and I do say to new members with all honesty, do not ever think I am looking at you if I am not and if you have got questions or things you want to talk to me about, please just come and tap me on the shoulder because I am here to serve you.

The purpose of today is to take note of the changes in the apportionment. We take the apportionment debate, which is where the General Synod gives approval to that part of the Archbishops' Council expenditure covered by apportionment, in July every year in

order that dioceses can have certainty as they plan for the following year. It does mean that the Archbishops' Council has to consider its budget way back in April and May.

Often, there are other things going on, and that was the case this year as we were in the middle of the Transforming Effectiveness review, which has been work that we have undertaken to understand how we can at once be more effective by making things more simple in the NCIs while saving costs and the burden that that places on dioceses. That work is now completing, and we are able to say to you that apportionment which we had already committed would be no more than in the previous year, will for 2022 be reduced by 3.7%, or £1.2 million, and that actually is a reduction of 12.4% of Vote 2, which is very much our operating budget.

But I thought it would really be helpful if I placed everything in the context of the financial economy of the Church of England, and I will talk to this slide in the opposite order from which it is presented there. We are here ultimately to serve those who worship in parishes and other worshipping communities. The parishes on the ground, that is where the rubber hits the road, and they are the bedrock of this Church.

The combined economy of the Church of England is £1.7 billion, or it was before Covid, of which about £1.1 billion comes in through parishes. Much of the remainder comes from areas of investment held either at diocesan or national level. Of that £1.1 billion, the parishes remit about a third to dioceses to support their activity. The dioceses in turn pay apportionment to the Archbishops' Council to cover expenditure of about £50 million, which is about 3% of that overall economy, but actually requiring funding of about £30 million, which is a bit over 3%. Understand that the totality of apportionment in respect of the overall finances of our dioceses is around 3% of revenue.

So the Votes that are now being passed for 2022 on the back of this work that has been done demonstrates that on Vote 1, which is very much about the training of ministry, we have again been able to afford an increase, thanks to some support from the Church Commissioners as we celebrate the growth in the number of ordinands coming through the system to levels not seen in recent decades.

On Vote 2, very much the operating budget of the Archbishops' Council, there is a further increase in expenditure driven by things we need to do like safeguarding, things you want us to do around racial justice and modern slavery, some with external funding, and things like digital, which has been so important, and is such an important area of investment going forward.

That is where over the years we have been able to gain the most support from our partner organisations like the Church Commissioners, the Corporation of Church House, and you can see this great disparity between the total we are spending and that which dioceses are asked to contribute.

Vote 3 is about grants to charities like the Church Urban Fund and organisations like the Anglican Communion Office. Vote 4 pays for the pensions to people who have been missionaries in our name, or in the name of related organisations. Vote 5 is for housing

for retired clergy, honouring the commitments we have made and now honoured for over a decade, to continue increasing the provision the finance for our retired clergy.

Equally, our commitment has to been to minimise the burden on the dioceses and through the support of those partners that I have mentioned, and through the use of our own reserves, we have been able to limit the increase in apportionment to about 1% per annum over the whole period. That is if you go back to 2014 where 89% of this entire budget element of Votes 1 to 5 was taken from apportionment, we are now down to 62%. That is the scale on which we have been keen to divert the burden from the dioceses whom we serve to find other ways of funding. I say thank you again to all the partners who have been involved.

I mentioned the £50 million of the £150 million, which is what the Archbishops' Council will have spent this year, covered by apportionment. The other £100 million is dealt with mainly on devolved powers only, delegated without authority but handled by the Strategic Investment Board. While this is a board of the Archbishops' Council, it is truly a partnership. We have Church Commissioners present and independent members. We work with dioceses as they prepare applications for funding, all this being about the move to have really highly effective intentional investment in areas of growth and opportunity.

We scrutinise the applications as they come forward and give them approval, often trying to find ways in which we can help them be shaped to further ensure their impact and success in implementation. We monitor that implementation carefully and we evaluate each project.

In honour of the commitment I gave to General Synod three years ago, we are now undertaking an independent review of many of those projects at a more strategic level through an independent panel which we have not been involved in recruiting.

In the current year you will see here that a bit of the £100 million I talked about on top of the £50 million has been dealt with directly by the Archbishops' Council. There is over £5 million for further support for strategic ministry funding, and that is about funding extra curacies at times when dioceses have been feeling under particular financial pressure.

We have had further investment in the Giving strategy which is a £7 million commitment over five years to help parishes invoke generosity and to fund diocesan giving advisers. The great bulk of dioceses have now taken advantage of that. We dispensed and distributed about £9.9 million of Government funding, heritage funding for cathedrals and large churches.

The rest of the money, the £83 million, sits with the Strategic Investment Board. £26 million is directed to the lower income communities, distributed by formula according to the relative and average income level of different dioceses, and £22 million to strategic development funding across a range of projects, where we have had such significant success. It has been wonderful to see how so many of them have withstood Covid. It is down from £26 million because we diverted funds from various pots to create a £35 million emergency sustainability fund, of which you will see £15 million was drawn down in 2020,

a further £12 million is being drawn down in 2021, we expect, leaving £8 million for next year.

There is an item there which new members may not understand of Transmission funding. The dioceses that were the greatest beneficiaries of the Darlow formula until that disappeared in 2017 have been the beneficiaries of a reducing amount of money every year to help them find different ways of funding the expenditure previously covered.

Then we have created something called the Diocesan Transformation Fund, very like the Strategic Transformation Fund, to support those dioceses which are trying to look across the whole diocese to look at things they need to change. Again, you will see there that £11 million has been taken from that.

This was all going very well and then along came Covid. Let us celebrate, as we have heard already, those churches that found great new ways of creating social impact in their communities, doing brilliant things. Let's celebrate the number of churches that were able to amend their ways of engagement and worship. And if ever the digital investment of the last four years has been justified, it has surely been in the way in which we have been able to call on that and move to a mixed ecology and hybrid worship in ways that will be sustained.

But be in no doubt, the impact on parish impact has been profound. Remember this is the biggest single driver of finance to the Church of England. As I speak to you, parish giving is now running at 10% below where it was in 2019. If I wanted to be really worried, I would point out that for September it was running at 2% below September 2020.

At the centre we have done many different things to try to support dioceses and parishes over this difficult period. The immediate steps were to create forbearance around stipends funds and to distribute grants which should have been funded across the whole of 2020, to do it at the outset. That exercise has been repeated in 2021, and, again, I thank the Church Commissioners for their help in this.

We created the £35 million Sustainability Fund to which I have alluded. We have carried on by doubling the size of the Cathedral Sustainability Fund. We have started, as you heard, on the Transforming Effectiveness piece aimed at finding cost savings. But it has not been enough.

What we have learnt is just how challenging the picture is. Where are we now? Well, we have learnt the parish share and parish income held up rather better than was first expected, if I take you back to March, April and May of last year, but we are also learning it is proving much more difficult to recover. I have to question whether it will ever again reach the levels that it did in 2019, where we knew that the numbers of regular givers were declining and their age was increasing.

We have learnt just how hard it is for dioceses to save money. Across the piece dioceses have worked so very, very hard to save around 8% on average of their annual revenue costs. That has been very tough to do and has not been enough to counter the loss of income from Parish Share and from other elements of trading such as property rentals

and so on. We have learnt how difficult it is to make a strategic impact at the centre. The work that Bishop Martin Seeley has led in the Transforming Effectiveness piece to secure that 21.4% saving in Vote 2 of the operating budget has enabled us to draw up 3.7%, but let us understand that across the average dioceses give about 6% of their annual revenue in apportionment, and we are saving 3.7% of 6%. It is a mere scratch on the surface. The need for transforming the financial effectiveness as well as spiritual and missional effectiveness of the Church of England is one for every single one of us.

My dear friends, let me just add something more from me. This presentation inevitably has been about finance because that is the role that I have been given to undertake, but money is not the end; it is merely the means. As I said when I was selected for this role and appointed to it, and have said on umpteen occasions since, if you want a finance chairman who will be happy to balance the books on a declining institution, you have the wrong person.

The joy of the risen Christ burns in this heart and I am so sad - I am so very, very sad - that the great bulk of the British population is not experiencing that joy with me. How can we ever be satisfied to do anything other than to march boldly forward? This is not a time to be frightened. It is a time to be determined. There may be some areas where there is a need for caution, but there is a greater need for creativity and for courage. Above all, there is a need for us to trust in Christ and to trust in each other.

She has been quoted a lot this morning but as Bishop Guli, to draw on her words in a recent talk in Chelmsford Cathedral, the Church may not look the same as the Church to which we are used, we may not be always certain where the road is taking us, but with trust in each other, we can walk confidently in the footsteps of our risen Lord.

I commit to you, General Synod, that in the remaining time I have in this role I will use such gifts as God has given me to help you have the financial resource you need to walk confidently along the road so that the Cross may be held high and seen in every part of this land.

I ask you to note this Report.

*The Chair:* Thank you. I apologise because there is a deck of slides which was meant to come up on the screen, and that has not happened, but it has been emailed round to General Synod members, so you do have it. This item is now open for debate.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* I need to declare an interest in that one of my nephews is employed by the National Church Institutions.

John, thank you for that fantastically inspirational speech, and particularly for what you said at the end. Thank you for all that you have done, and your team and David, to work on this budget and to reduce the apportionment for the dioceses. That is much appreciated.

My question is about the Evangelism and Discipleship Team. As Archbishop Stephen said yesterday so powerfully, although we are to embrace all Five Marks of Mission

holistically, without the first two - telling and teaching, evangelism and discipleship - we will not have a church to continue with. Without asking you to say anything that would compromise or undermine the current processes, please could you give the assurances that you can on the place of evangelism and discipleship within the Vote 2 budget and the six new teams that are being established?

*Revd Barry Hill (Leicester):* I was not planning on speaking so apologies for a lack of articulation, but your passion, as ever, John, has stirred me, as did one comment you made that it is not enough. I have led two SDF programmes now and we see the difference they make in the local church and parishes; we see the lives and communities transformed. I appreciate you are not here to speak for the Church Commissioners, but in the various funds the Archbishops' Council operates with money on their behalf. I am conscious the argument for not releasing more funds has always been to not damage intergenerational equity, and yet as hundreds of millions have been released, so our asset base has gone up and up by hundreds of millions. Do you consider there is a greater risk to intergenerational equity by not releasing further funds directly to parishes, or to parishes and chaplaincies and Fresh Expressions through dioceses and parishes, than there is in holding on to what one might argue are quite large barns?

*Revd Marcus Walker (London):* Thank you very much indeed for your presentation of this budget. As you have so rightly said, so much of the Church's money, so much of the Church's apportionment comes from the hard work of parishes - £1.1 billion. So many parishes have suffered, as you have said, over the course of the terrible pandemic and it has had a huge, huge impact on their ability to raise money, and on the ability of so many people to be able to go to church to give their money.

Do you think that there is a possibility that the Church Commissioners' huge windfall of £500 million in the same year as that pandemic could be retargeted towards the parishes as a one-off gift to clear all of the deficits of that one year in order that each parish could actually say we are starting the next year from at least the place where they were the year before? What primary legislation would be necessary which this Synod could take in order to enable that to happen?

*The Chair:* Canon Spence to give a response, please.

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio):* Thank you for three excellent questions, the first of them on evangelism and discipleship. The changes in Church House are not intended in any way to weaken the E&D team. Far from it. It is all about moving from silo working to collaborative working and shared ventures. Bishop Martin is not only head of Transforming Effectiveness but is also chair of the Ministry Council, and he is fully engaged in ensuring that unit is as effective as possible.

I am really grateful for the two questions that relate to the Church Commissioners, and I want to put on record my great thanks to them for all the support they have given, and to Alan Smith who has come in as First Church Estates Commissioner, succeeding Loretta, who did such a great job. Alan understands that intergenerational equity cannot be counted as money alone. I do not want to prejudge today the work that is going on (and do you know I have more boards to go to these days than you have hot dinners at times)

in both the Emerging Church Steering Group and the Triennium Funding Working Group. We recognise there is a need to understand how we get the balance right. I think it is recognised by all parties. We are working together. We are the whole Church, and I will say of Alan Smith as First Church Estates Commissioner, and I hope it is reciprocated, I have total trust in him. We will find a way do this.

Just one thing. I often hear this word about breaking intergenerational inequity. It is not a black and white thing. I am being prodded now. It is not a black and white thing, it is shades of grey, and let us understand how we get that mix right.

*The Chair:* Would anyone else like to speak?

*Mrs Julie Dziegiel (Oxford):* I declare two interests, one as a member of the Archbishops' Council Finance Committee and one as a trustee of the Parish Giving Scheme. Both are relevant. I would like to say that it has been a privilege to serve on the Archbishops' Council Finance Committee with John as Chair. He is inspirational and his heart is always for the Kingdom. It is extraordinary in the realm of finance.

Regarding the Parish Giving Scheme, regular committed Christian giving has held up this Church through the pandemic. The Parish Giving Scheme now processes 40% of the regular committed giving in the Church of England. It makes life easier for treasurers and it makes life easier for givers. Please may I commend it to you. If your diocese is not signed up, please look at it. If your diocese is signed up, please do everything, members of this Synod, to encourage your parishes to use it. It has been a lifesaver during this time.

*Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield):* I am delighted to hear from you again, John. Thank you for your expertise.

This is a question about digital resourcing. We asked and have prayed for 10,000 new churches and God, being a God of great surprise, has given us 8,000 new online sets of communities to look at and to service digitally. Having looked at the budget and seen an increase of only £36,000 in the apportionment for digital services, I wonder whether we can reconsider that amount and look at it for future years, and whether any grand plan is being hatched for how we take this forward, because we do not want to lose the persons that we have made connections with during this pandemic. It is very important to keep people online, especially those who are unable to attend church in person for various disability reasons or reasons of care.

From my own point of view, I would echo what has been said about the discipline of having to look very hard at our evangelism budgets during this crisis. I hope that some of the Strategic Development funding can be diverted into some more of the excellent projects that are being put forward by the Digital Group. I am really impressed by their work. Thank you, John.

*Revd Jane Palmer (Salisbury):* Thank you, John, for your clear and helpful presentation. It is inspiring and it is clear there is a real challenge, but of course we trust that, with God, all things are possible.

In our diocese we have engaged with a comprehensive generous giving campaign, and of course we must be bolder with our preaching and teaching on giving. However, what I have not heard is a discussion on the reality of the changing culture around us. We clearly cannot continue to walk confidently and boldly with our current structures. Change is coming, as we have heard.

As a young person, I reflect that many younger generations have less disposable income. Sociological and economic studies clearly discuss this, but in the Church we continually ask for more money, in the same way, from the same people, without grasping the need for new, dynamic and creative ways forward, instead of repeating the same message to tired parishes. The Gospel is gloriously free. Is the Archbishops' Council attempting to write this new map that we hear about, and are you engaging with this reality about the differences in generations, which includes money, but also values?

*The Chair.* Canon Spence, please would you respond to those three speeches?

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio):* Julie, I warmly echo your endorsement of the Parish Giving Scheme. It is a great scheme. Julie, you are a valued member of the Finance Committee so you do not need to grovel and crawl as much, so it is fine!

Penny, we have a three-year commitment on digital and 2022 is the final year. I spoke to the Digital Team and they told me they had as much money as they could usefully spend, but your guidance to us is very good. We should really be thinking hard about what more we need to do. I think it is a great challenge to William to take back to the team: what do we need to do? I will say I am very keen to maintain ring-fenced funding for the digital work. If it had not been ring-fenced we would not have achieved what we did.

On the final question, and I did not quite catch your name, I am sorry, listened and understood. I would invite all members of the Archbishops' Council here today to take that on board because we are doing stuff. We know we need to change. I always talk to the Archbishop of Canterbury about whether we are being radical enough. You will hear something this afternoon about the radicalism of things coming on. Your guidance to us, to think across that wider piece about all things in the changing world we serve, is very well taken.

*The Chair.* Thank you. If you would like to speak in the debate, please stand.

*The Chair* imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

*Mr Gavin Drake (Southwell & Nottingham):* I have two declaration of interest to make. First, I am the remunerated Director of Communications and IT for the Anglican Communion, thus a recipient of the Anglican Communion fund grant. I am not going to talk about that other than to thank you for that. I want to talk about Vote 2. My interest there is I am the non-remunerated director of a safeguarding campaigning organisation called the Jill Saward Organisation.

I want to thank you for the increase in spending on safeguarding matters. Question 8 last night showed it had increased from £1.086 million in 2016 to £2.354 million in 2020. My concern is whether this money is being spent effectively. What measures do we have and what safeguards do we have, if you will excuse the pun, to ensure that safeguarding expenditure is being used wisely and an effectively? The National Safeguarding Team slogan is “Promoting a safe Church”. Our national effort should be not promoting a safe Church but mandating a safe Church. Safeguarding issues arise in the dioceses. We have seen a lot of increase in national expenditure. What we need to see is that trickling down into mandating dioceses to act appropriately.

*Mr Clive Billenness (Europe):* I am an auditor and people will not realise there are three sorts of auditor, those who can add up and those who cannot, and, therefore, you can now work out which sort I am.

Canon Spence, thank you so much for your report and explanation this morning. As I came out of my hotel this morning, it was announced that the headline rate of inflation is now crossing the 4% barrier and will go higher. Are you satisfied that you have enough contingency if this rise continues? Will it imperil our programme?

*Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford):* Very briefly, the Revd Marcus Walker asked a question which I think has slipped through the net, so I will just ask it again, if I may. Would the Church Commissioners consider using some of their recent large windfall to clear the 2020 deficit of parishes? What legislation would be needed to enable that to happen?

*The Chair:* Thank you. Canon Spence, you have two minutes for a reply.

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio):* Gavin on safeguarding, I think we have been responding to events over the last five years and we have increased the budget radically. There needs to come a point where we stand back and have an independent look at its effectiveness. I would suggest that that moment may be coming as we finish creating the independent piece.

I am really sorry, I have forgotten the second question, but on the third one, Prudence, I was not avoiding the question. I am not sure that the right thing to do would be to do a one-off piece to clear every deficit. Deficits are there for different reasons. I am trying to say that we are having very good discussions with the Church Commissioners about future funding. I could not commit at this stage to what that might end up looking like. In terms of primary legislation, I am not sure that any would be required, actually, because if the Church Commissioners decided to grant some sort of special dividend, that is for the trustees of that body.

The second question, Michael, is a great question. We have to work on it. Only yesterday I was hearing about very good staff here who are being tempted by higher salaries elsewhere. My role is to keep abreast of it, but clearly inflation is a risk not just to the Archbishops' Council but to every part of the Church. We are there, we are on it, but can I predict exactly what it will mean? We do not know how far it will go and long it will last.

*Mr Alan Smith (ex officio):* First of all, thanks, John, for your work. It is interesting, at my local parish church about two or three Sundays ago someone came up to me said, “Do you and John Spence get along?” And the answer is we do. What was also very powerful about that was that they immediately reiterated John’s vision about us - and it is us - funding the Church with a vision of having the risen Christ in every parish, not in the Church Commissioners but in every parish, and that voice that we heard from John there is very much what we are hearing in the Commissioners, but also what we are looking at in terms of our allocation processes. The whole issue of intergenerational equity, the issue of how much we bring forward today as against relief tomorrow, those are complex issues but we are looking at them.

To all of the people who are here, I was telling someone earlier that each time I leave the Synod chamber I hear another billion coming off of our money, and that is literally all of our Church, but that is not how we are looking at it. We want to ensure that we are really thinking very wisely about this next three-year period and 10-year period, and John and I are working hand in glove on that. Not just me but all of us as Commissioners, in particular our actuaries, are looking at that really closely. Thank you so much for those challenges. They really are important challenges, but I would let you know we are listening and acting very purposively on that.

*Mrs Sue Slater (Lincoln):* We keep hearing Vote 1 as being about training for ministry, but the text always tells us that it is about ordinands. When can we hope to see within our budgeting some realistic funding for the training of lay people, who all our reports tell us, and keep telling us, are going to be absolutely vital for the Church today, tomorrow, and for ever?

*Ven. Fiona Gibson (Hereford):* Thank you, Chair, for calling me and thank you, Canon Spence, for your presentation. Like our colleague from Leicester, I had no intention of speaking in this debate, so forgive me for being somewhat inarticulate.

You referred in your presentation, Canon Spence, to the necessary cuts in various budgets and departments across the Church institutions. I would like to ask, if I may, how and where decisions are made across the different departments - for example, finance, HR, theology, vocations, ministry and mission - are made.

I suppose my big question could be summed up in the words of Shoshana Zuboff who, when writing about surveillance capitalism, said: “Who knows, who decides and who decides who decides?”

*The Chair:* At this point, I will test the mind of Synod on a motion for closure. If the Synod would like to close the motion, then I will ask John to use his next speech as a closing speech. If Synod wants to carry on debating then, of course, John will make a response and continue to take speeches.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* I now call on Canon Spence to respond to the debate and to move the motion.

*Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio):* Alan, thank you for your words. In terms of the training of lay people, absolutely, the applause in this room will have been heard. We recognise that it is key, if we are going to have the ministry of the Church going forward, that everyone is called, and we need to ensure that there is good support for lay ministers. I actually saw a draft proposal on the topic in the last few weeks which Bishop Martin and his team are working on. I think we are some way away, to be quite honest, but it is on the table, and you are absolutely right to raise it.

Fiona, on your question about who decides, the responsibility lies ultimately with the Archbishops' Council. The trustees thereof all take their trustee responsibilities very seriously, but we do not work in isolation. If I may be as bold as to say one of the great blessings and benefits to come out of Covid is we now have a House of Bishops which has been meeting so much more regularly, and that creates a very cohesive force, so they are fully engaged. The Emerging Church Steering Group, which brings together people from the House of Bishops, the Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners and everyone, they are all engaged. We really have a very full consultation and engagement process. The legal responsibility sits with the trustees. I can assure you they act after consultation and deliberation.

Why does that matter? Because there is not an Archbishops' Council and a Church Commissioners and a Pensions Board and a lot of dioceses and a lot of parishes. There is one Christ, one body. We are one Church and if we operate in that way, I finish as I began, we will walk forward boldly with confidence. Thank you all for your contributions and I look forward to working with you.

*Revd Marcus Walker (London):* On a point of order, Madam Chair, as somebody who is very new, you might be able to advise me on this. How might this House, were it to wish to do so, advise or request the Church Commissioners to take the action which Mr Spence did not feel it was necessary to do?

*The Chair:* I am sorry that is not a point order. That is a request for information, so please would you speak to someone at the information desk in due course?

We now come to vote on Item 9, "that the Synod do take note of this Report."

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* That item is clearly carried. That concludes this item of business. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell)* took the Chair at 11.27 am.

**ITEM 500**  
**SPECIAL AGENDA I**  
**LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS**  
**VACANCY IN SEE COMMITTEES (AMENDMENT)**

## **REGULATION 2021 (GS 2236)**

*The Chair:* Dear friends, Synod, we are now at Item 500. Members may wish to refer to the explanatory document GS 2236X. With the concurrence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, I move Item 500, the motion for proclaiming as an Act of Synod the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation in the form it takes following its amendment at last July's group of sessions.

Synod, this item is now open for debate. Does anyone wish to speak? Excellent. I see no one indicating they wish to speak and, therefore, I put Item 500 to the vote. I think, if Synod is okay, we will just do that with a show of hands.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* The motion having been carried, I shall now ratify and confirm it for the Province of York and the Archbishop of Canterbury will do so for the Province of Canterbury. The customary form of Declaration will now be read by the Registrar.

*The Registrar:* "WHEREAS the Archbishops, Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the General Synod of the Church of England assembled at their Synod in Westminster did on the seventeenth Day of November in the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-One solemnly affirm and proclaim as an Act of Synod the Vacancy in See Committees Regulation 1993, as subsequently amended, being word for word annexed hereto.

NOW THEREFORE WE JUSTIN PORTAL by Divine Providence Archbishop of Canterbury and STEPHEN GEOFFREY by Divine Providence Archbishop of York do hereby RATIFY AND CONFIRM the said Act of Synod for Our respective Provinces and do hereby PROCLAIM to each and every of Our dioceses THE SAID REGULATION as an ACT OF SYNOD and do instruct the Clerk to the General Synod to transmit a copy of the said Act of Synod to the secretary of each Diocesan Synod requiring that it be formally proclaimed in the Diocesan Synod at the next session.

Dated this seventeenth Day of November in the Year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-One."

*The Chair:* The Act of Synod will now be sent to the Diocesan Synod. That completes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Canon Professor Joyce Hill (London)* took the Chair at 11.32 am.

## **ITEM 10 APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER OF THE ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL (GS 2237)**

*The Chair:* Members, we often experience pressure of time in General Synod and find ourselves struggling to keep up with the clock. This time we are ahead of the clock

because we were not expecting to be quite as early as this in moving to Item 10, but we are, so we will.

This is Item 10, the appointment of a member of the Archbishops' Council, which is to approve the appointment of Mark Sheard as a member of the Archbishops' Council until 14 February 2027. I call upon the Archbishop of York to speak and to move Item 10. He may have up to ten minutes, although I suspect he may not take up to ten minutes. But he has it if he wants it.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Synod, as you will have read in GS 2227, approval is required from this body for appointments to the Archbishops' Council, and Synod is asked today to approve the appointment of Mark Sheard for a further term which would expire on 14 February 2027.

Following a similar appointment to the Archbishops' Council back in July, a request was made for Synod members to see the terms of all the appointed members, which has been provided in the paper and I trust is helpful.

During Mark's first term on the Archbishops' Council, his contribution to our meetings has been extremely valuable. Many of you will know him well and will know he brings with him an enthusiasm that we see throughout his involvement in the national Church, and I am sure also at St John's Ealing where he serves so faithfully.

Mark is often the voice asking the important and challenging questions, underpinned with a real passion for the mission of the Church of England, particularly the championing of the laity, and, of course, those with disabilities around their calling in the mission of God. Mark is the chair of the Mission & Public Affairs Council and is at ease holding together different views across the theological spectrum with the same grace we see upheld in the Archbishops' Council. Mark is also instrumental in the work of the Evangelism and Discipleship Steering Group. Colleagues across the NCIs, and those of us who have known him in Synod value hugely the wisdom and the care along with a wealth of experience which he brings to the role, having served on the board of World Vision, and more recently through his work in steering that organisation through the pandemic.

Mark is a trustee of Fresh Expressions. His knowledge of both public affairs and marketing brings real skills to the work of the Archbishops' Council, alongside his deep desire for the good news of Jesus Christ to be shared in our nation, through the Church of England. Quite simply, to those of us who know him and work with him, Mark is a joy to have as a colleague on the Archbishops' Council and, therefore, I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

*The Chair:* Thank you. The motion is now open for debate. Anyone wishing to speak, please stand. It would appear not. The Archbishop therefore has nothing to reply to and as he has already moved the motion, we can proceed immediately to a vote.

*The motion was put and carried on a show of hands.*

*The Chair:* My goodness, I do not think I have ever chaired anything quite as brief as that. That therefore concludes this item of business.

I just want to remind you that during the lunch break there will be an opportunity for the chairs of Synod groups to address Synod, on an informal basis of course. Penny Allen is co-ordinating that, and that will take place here in the Assembly Hall, I understand, at 1 o'clock. If you would like to find out more about Synod groups, please come back for an informal meeting at 1 pm, otherwise lunch is available. We will resume our Agenda business at 2 o'clock promptly back here in the Assembly Hall, so you have an unusually long lunch break.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin)* took the Chair at 2.00 pm.

## **ITEM 11 VISION AND STRATEGY (GS 2238)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. We come now to Item 11. You will need GS 2238. This is a presentation on the Vision and Strategy programme of work to provide us with an update on this programme. The Archbishop of York will be making the presentation and, following the presentation, there will be an opportunity for questions. May I remind folks from the outset: please do not write long speeches. We are only taking questions at that point. I call upon the Archbishop of York to make his presentation.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* I would like to begin this presentation with a short film which shows us mixed ecology - which has been a misunderstood phrase I think for some of us - and what this means primarily in the life of one diocese. Hopefully, the technology this afternoon will work.

(Video played)

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Dear friends, as you know, the vision for the Church of England in the 2020s is to become a Christ-centred and a Jesus Christ-shaped Church, which means primarily a spiritual and a theological renewal, deepening our prayer and delighting in worship.

I was so grateful for our Chaplain's homily this morning on the beauty of holiness. But also to be so challenged by our life in Christ that it overflows in loving service to the world, creating more spaces where more people can encounter Christ, as we saw in the mighty diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, and I know we could have gone to any diocese in the Church of England and found similar things. Hence also the importance of putting the Five Marks of Mission at the heart of what it means to live what the Anglican Communion calls a Jesus-shaped life.

As you know, three strategic priorities have emerged: to be a Church of missionary disciples; to be a younger and more diverse Church; and to be a Church where mixed ecology is the norm in the ways we have just seen demonstrated but which, of course,

will look different in different contexts, geographies, demographics and according to different needs. Starting today with mixed ecology, over the next few Synods we are going to dig into these ideas to learn from each other and see how they can help us move the Church of England into deeper and more sustained growth.

I am sorry if some of this has not always been presented as clearly as it should and has caused for some people some nervousness, but this afternoon let me try to be very clear. When we speak about mixed ecology, we are speaking about the whole ecosystem of the Church not one way of being Church replacing another. The historic vocation of the Church of England is to be the Church for everyone everywhere. We are the national Church. We want every person we serve to have an opportunity to encounter the transformation that a life centred on Jesus Christ can bring.

We, therefore, need to find ways of reaching and serving people in the very diverse circumstances and contexts of our national life today in places of leisure, work, education, as well as the local neighbourhood, online as well as in person and, actually, we are getting quite good at that. I understand this to be the revitalisation of parish, not its demise. I note with joy the fact that it is already happening in many places.

This is why in the paper our six bold outcomes seek a parish system revitalised for mission through a mixed ecology Church creating new Christian communities across those four areas of home, work and education, social and digital, where we live our lives. Therefore, we are not, absolutely not, firing the starting gun on something new. Much of this, as we have seen, is already happening in parishes of all traditions. Rather, what we are doing is we are catching up with the work of the Holy Spirit who has already danced ahead of us and is blessing Messy Church, school chaplaincy and all sorts of other online gatherings for prayer and discipleship.

There is also a theological and a missiological imperative. We have been charged to make disciples of all nations and, therefore, all peoples and all cultures. Therefore, one size will not fit all. It takes the whole world to know Christ. I said this to some of the young people on Monday. If I would have been in charge - if you forgive such a thought - at Pentecost, I would have done it differently. If I would have been in charge at Pentecost, what I would have done is I would have got, much more sensible, the whole world to speak one language. That would be a much better way of communicating the message and much more efficient but that, of course, is precisely what the Holy Spirit does not do. Not the whole world speaking one language, but the Church speaking every language because place and context really matter. From that point onwards, from Pentecost onwards, the story of Christian mission has been the story of cultural adaptability as the unchanging message of what God has done in Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection is translated into the constantly changing languages and cultures of human experience. If you want a book to read about this, by the way, I can recommend one. It is called the New Testament.

This work, the work of the Holy Spirit, to bring Christ to every person in every place does not stop. We are, as I said yesterday, always moving into the uncharted territory of new cultures and new contexts. Therefore, we want to see the ecosystem of the Church expressed in these ways.

First, a viable, sustainable presence in every neighbourhood, i.e. the parish church, and with a particular care for our poorest communities. Secondly, usually growing from that, new communities of faith, new expressions of Christian community, both online but also in person, mission initiatives large and small, like Messy Church or after school clubs or workplace chaplaincies - hey, Synod, maybe even 10,000 of them. Thirdly, we want to develop chaplaincy, not just in schools, universities, prisons and hospitals, but sports and workplace chaplaincy and even shopping centres. This is an area of growth and opportunity. Fourthly, we long to see a renewal of the religious life. Most movements of renewal in the Church have begun with a new experience of God, a new delight in prayer and worship and the sacramental life. There are signs of this happening in small and unexpected ways and we must nurture them.

Our work as Synod is to understand and see what God is doing through this and make sure that we do not get left behind and align our resources centrally and our training for the next generation of clergy and lay ministers to this rediscovery of what it truly means to be the Church with a mission for everyone, a mixed ecology. Pope Francis has put it this way: "The Church is a people with many faces and expresses its truth in countless different ways according to each culture". He goes on: "That is why I like to think that evangelization must always be in the dialect of each place with the same words and sounds that a grandmother uses to sing lullabies to her grandchildren". What a beautiful way of thinking about evangelism: singing the song of the Gospel in the language of the people we serve, all of them everywhere, especially those who are excluded.

Yesterday, we looked at the beginning of John 21. Let me finish at the end of that chapter, therefore, at the end of John's Gospel itself. John says that if everything that Jesus did was written down, then the world itself could not contain all the books that would be written. I do not think John just means writing down all the things that Jesus said and did in his ministry which did not make it into the Gospels. I think he means all the things that Jesus continues to do and continues to say in the power of the spirit through His Church, through His Church which is us, the responsibilities we carry. We are the ones who are called to live and tell Christ's story, recognising that in order to reach everyone everywhere we need to become, as we have always been, a mixed ecology Church.

This, of course, is still a Church under the oversight of bishops and Synods, with parish clergy having the cure of souls. None of this changes. But the whole point of the cure of souls is it refers to everyone in the parish not just a gathered congregation.

Synod, it is for the re-expression and revitalisation of this vision that I invite us to consider how we can align our resources to enable the Church to flourish in many different ways and for Jesus to be made known. I now look forward to your questions.

*Revd Fr Thomas Seville (Religious Communities):* Archbishop, in the light of your comments yesterday and which you have echoed today about the emphasis which is also being put on mission in parishes, may I ask what measures are in place and being considered for the amendment of the criterion which I think is given for SDF funding of funding needing to be directed to population centres of I think it is 100,000? In other

words, can some of this money be released more liberally for small scale parish based projects?

*Mrs Catherine Butcher (Chichester):* I welcome the Archbishop of York's emphasis on us speaking everyday language and using local dialects. I trained as a journalist so I could learn to share my faith in everyday language, but in preparing to lead church services I am required to use authorized liturgical language. How will we make it possible for every person to access an expression of Church in ways that make sense to them when we often use words that do not make sense and sound like gobbledygook and when we often use written resources with inaccessible graduate level language that does not make sense to the majority of people in our parishes? In pursuing this ambitious vision will we be authorized to speak in more normal language, where appropriate?

*Revd Paul Bradbury (Salisbury):* Thank you, Archbishop, for the vision of Emerging Church and this aspiration of a mixed ecology of church. The role of pioneers, lay and ordained, with a particular gift in calling for the cross-cultural contextual mission and church planting, will be crucial for the development of a mixed ecology of church. I am involved in the training of lay pioneers through the CMF certificate and the offer of a national programme of training for pioneer curates.

At present, there are two particular concerns regarding the training and deployment of pioneers. First, lay pioneers must fund all their own training and, secondly, there is a significant concern amongst ordained pioneers about how they can continue in their vocation and ministry beyond curacy. Could the Archbishops say what plans are being considered, first, for the support of training of lay pioneers and, secondly, for a strategic look at the way in which ordained stipendiary ministry might be deployed to achieve this ambition of a mixed ecology of church?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Thank you so much for those questions. Fr Thomas, first of all, it has been agreed in principle - there is a lot of detail to be worked out - that, obviously, finance must follow vision. Now that we have some strategic priorities that still need lots of work on it, it follows that the funding that is available needs to be aligned to the vision. Work on that has begun and nothing is off the table. I am sure you will continue to hold us to friendly account on that, but I think what we heard from John Spence this morning is another indicator that we are looking again at those things in the light of this Vision and Strategy.

Catherine, thank you very much for your question. I often think that Common Worship actually gives us much greater leeway than we sometimes realise. I entirely recognise what you are saying and I think the liturgical mission will continue to do the work of offering simple liturgies that we do need in some contexts. There is a lot that we can do but, basically, I agree with you with the one caveat that, just as with the nurture of our children so with the nurture of new disciples, part of that nurturing is to be nurtured into the fullness of the Christian faith and at some point, therefore, we need to encounter the beautiful rich conceptual ideas at the heart of our faith which I do not think we want to argue away. Before long, we do need to talk about the Trinity. We do need to talk about the sacraments. We do need to talk about reconciliation. We need to talk about sin and forgiveness. These are not concepts that are widely known in the world. It is about being

alongside people, developing good relationships and then, in that, finding the right language, but missiologically what you raise is massively important.

Paul, thank you for your question. This is something we are - and by "we" I mean the Church, Ministry Division and others - looking at and I am very aware of the challenges around curacies for ordained pioneer ministers. We probably need to develop different models and I think that is being looked at.

*Canon Peter Adams (St Albans):* Could you tell us how has the Vision and Strategy group specifically reviewed and learnt from the lessons from the many projects funded by the SDF (Strategic Development Funding). Many of these projects have explored new forms of church at a scale in a way that can be evaluated and, indeed, the governance of them has required substantial monitoring.

Secondly, what thoughts have been given to the use of the place of the deanery as a missional entity? Many deaneries, both in cities and in rural areas, offer opportunities for work that small parishes are unable to sustain.

*Mr David Kemp (Canterbury):* I speak from the experience of the team ministry of five churches of Whitstable on the North Kent coast. The future aspiration is simpler, humbler, bolder. The present reality is smaller, congregations down by 30 to 40%; poorer, income down by 10 to 20%; less confidence and energy, we cannot even fill the Sunday morning coffee rota. Archbishop, are you able and willing to be patient with the churches and parishes who have been through the car crash of Covid?

*Revd Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Liverpool):* I was on the working group for mixed ecology and really enjoyed and was delighted to see the change in the language from mixed economy to mixed ecology, which I think is incredibly rich. I was a bit disappointed with the film which seemed to just be about doing mixed stuff rather than using that richness of the vision of ecology and the idea of the cycling of nutrients. My question is we as the Church of England, it does not seem to me, are the ecology. We are part of an ecology of the Church and so how much is or can this vision be ecumenical?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Again, thank you so much. First of all, Peter, there is not a Vision and Strategy group and there kind of never has been. There has been lots and lots of different groups of people meeting and talking, but there has never been a group. In fact, I would like to think the General Synod of the Church of England is now the Vision and Strategy group who will be overseeing this and sharing wisdom and working together. There is an independent review ongoing into the use of SDF.

David Kemp, thank you so much for your question and your honesty. I am very, very aware that in many parishes what it feels like is to be smaller, poorer and feeling timid and frightened of the future. I am very aware of that. The Vision and Strategy is a Vision and Strategy for the 2020s. It is something that we see unfolding over the medium term of the next ten years. I hope there is lots and lots of room for patience. I think I would also say it is because we know how tough it is in so many places that we want to bring

some fresh vision, some fresh energy and, where we can, fresh resources into enabling the Church to flourish, but I do not underestimate how tough it is in many, many places.

Finally, Miranda was, as she said, part of the group that was looking into this about a year ago to help shape the thinking on mixed ecology and, yes, this vision must be bigger than the Church of England. There is a lot more I could say, now is not the time, but thank you for reminding us particularly of the ecumenical dimension. There are others as well.

*Revd Canon Rachel Mann (Manchester):* As ever, Archbishop Stephen, an exciting presentation which speaks to my soul, but I wonder if you could say a little more about the theological work that has been done into the understanding of ecology that underpins this and how this relates to a Church of England ecclesiology which is so parish-centred?

*Ven. Paul Ayers (Leeds):* There was quite a lot in the film about meeting needs, which is language that we do use quite a lot. I was taken aback by a clergy colleague last week who said to me, “No, we don’t have the resources to meet needs and it’s cruel to pretend that we do”. Jesus told the apostles to go and find persons of peace, which meant people that will take you in and serve you and he said, “Our job is not to invite people to be served, but to serve”. Jesus did not meet the needs of the woman at the well, as was said in the film. She met his. We are not Lady Bountiful going around handing out largesse to our dependants. I wonder whether you think we should be changing our language on this, maybe that is part of being humbler?

*Revd Preb. Dr Amatu Christian-Iwuagwu (London):* Archbishop, thank you very much for the mixed ecology model which we are now using to describe the mission and ministry and vision of our Church. Paul visited Athens and when he got there he found an inscription that says, “Unknown God”. I think I am here to remind you that in this mixed ecology it seems to me that there is emphasis on parishes, chaplains and LLMs. I recognise that we are moving in uncharted territory, as you have quoted and, therefore, we must cast our nets, as we were reminded yesterday by the Archbishop of Canterbury not just to one place.

*The Chair:* Can we have the question?

*Revd Preb. Dr Amatu Christian-Iwuagwu (London):* My question is where is the role of SSMs in this model of mixed ecology?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Rachel, as ever, thank you so much for your question. I say with a smile, I feel I have moved on a bit in that I am not being accused of the Nestorian heresy in the theological interrogation of this. Of course, there is not time here to say much more, except that there is a group which Synod will hear from in due course over these sessions looking into the theological underpinning of this. They have completed the first stage of their work.

The second stage, Isabelle Hanley has now picked up the baton from David Ford. Isabelle is going to be with others producing both resources for us to receive but also actually things for us to enter into creatively to talk through this because there are some unanswered theological questions. They are exciting ones, which for me are about the

rediscovery of what does it mean to be the Church for everyone. Bearing in mind earlier things, to use the simplest language I can: in a smorgasbord of cultures like ours where people live their lives in such radically different ways, what does it mean to be the Church for everyone, which I think has been our vocation and hence we have used language like “the revitalisation of parish”. We do not want to set one way of being church in stone.

Hans Kuhn, the great Swiss theologian, said, “To do the same thing when everything else around you changes is not to do the same thing”. Or, to put it another way, in order to stay the same we are going to have to change or we are going to walk forwards backwards. It is those paradoxical ideas which really do need some digging into. I hope we might even do that at Synod at some point, it will make a nice change from some of the other things we talk about. I am hugely grateful for the question. This is about a theological renewal as well as a missiological and spiritual renewal.

The question about meeting needs, yes, to an extent I entirely agree with you, though I thought the example of chaplaincy was not like that.

As I said, those of you who were at the worship this morning I thought the homily was really superb giving us a window into a very different approach to ministry which is much more typified by those of us in chaplaincy ministry than those of us in parochial ministry. We need to let these models flourish alongside each other and in communion with each other. Amatu, I could say a lot but take it as read - but perhaps I should have said - ministry belongs to the whole people of God. That is our starting point. It is about our baptism. We all, therefore, have a share in God’s ministry and mission of love to the world and play our different part. Some of us are called to be ordained and within that ordained ministry there are many different ways of expressing it and we need more of everything is the way I would put it. Certainly, there is a huge place for self-supporting ministry and for self-supporting ministry often to take greater positions of leadership and oversight in the Church.

*Dr Rosalind Clarke (Lichfield):* I am very glad to hear the Archbishop confirm that the goal of this Vision and Strategy is church growth. I wonder what research has been done or has been planned to analyse whether the kinds of projects mentioned, especially those that are not primarily located in the parish, do, in fact, lead to church growth and whether those projects are more or less effective than stipendiary parish ministry. Are there plans for pilot schemes to test the mixed ecology Church?

*Revd Mike Tufnell (Salisbury):* I hope the Chair will give me grace to briefly ground my question, which is about the resourcing of youth chaplaincy as part of a mixed ecology approach in a story from my local context. At the end of last year, a 16 year old young woman from a troubled background was excluded from our local upper school and thrown out of home at the same time. Since then, our youth pastor, part of that school’s chaplaincy team, helped connect the young lady with a newly formed community pastoral team given oversight by our curate. That pastoral team, in turn, provided her with a mentor helping to support her continued education elsewhere. She is now apprenticing in a community cafe kitchen and recently prepared a delicious lunch for me.

Finally, coming to my question, a missional community in our deanery currently meets in that same cafe space and through their meeting in that local space, understandably perceived as less intimidating, that young lady has now been given an accessible discipleship pathway to exploring faith in Jesus Christ. Is this the kind of mixed ecology approach envisioned by this Vision and Strategy and will extra central funding and strategic training come soon to help the excellent work of local youth pastors who provide crucial support through school chaplaincy, as we saw in the excellent video earlier, in a time where the mental wellbeing of young people is in crisis and yet the opportunity for the Gospel is great?

*Revd Arwen Folkes (Chichester):* The vision is exciting. It is creative and bold and I can see parishes and many of my colleagues wanting to engage with this. But my question is when you receive applications to cover the costs of administration and building maintenance and all the ordinary things that would liberate parish clergy, churchwardens and officers of the ordinary parishes of the Church of England, will they be dismissed for not being shiny enough?

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* I think I can deal with them relatively briefly, though they are really important questions. The answer to the last question is no. Of course, we will look at everything that is put forward and, no, there is not a sort of criteria in the ways that you suggest, though I realise it may well feel like that sometimes.

To Mike, the answer is yes, yes and yes to the things you raise and the vital importance of resourcing ministry with young people. One of our objectives is to be a younger Church and our financial resources that we have must be and will be aligned to that.

I want to spend a bit more, if I may, on Rosalind's important question because perhaps I have not made myself as clear as I should have done and I am trying to. As I see it, the mixed ecology is the parish. It is not that there is something else called mixed ecology. The mixed ecology is the way in which we fulfil our vocation and almost all the examples you will find of these new initiatives come through parish ministry. It started because a parish church and a vicar and a PCC actually saw a missional need and started something new to meet it. I do not see these as two separate things. If some people do have real principled theological difficulties about this concept then I will have a discussion with you, but only if you cancel your 8 o'clock. It is important to recognise that most parishes have two services on a Sunday, an 8 o'clock and, let us say, a quarter to 10 o'clock. I do not think you say to the people at the end of the 8 o'clock, "You must come back at 10 o'clock because we do not run a mixed ecology church here, we are just the one church".

No, we recognised centuries ago that actually different services meet the different needs of different groups of people and that is the system we have been running for a long while. We used to have Evensong as well and then we would have a youth group. The biggest growth area when I was a parish priest was the Wednesday morning mass. I have to say I did spend a long time persuading people who came to the Wednesday morning mass that they ought to come on Sunday because Sunday was proper church, but I discovered that they could not come on Sunday because for some of them it was a bone of contention

within their family about what happened on Sundays and some of them were visiting family a long way away on Sundays.

It took me a couple of years for the penny to drop and say I am fighting a rear-guard action to keep Sundays special, the Holy Spirit is blessing Wednesday. Wake up and smell the incense. I put resources into Wednesday. We would have coffee after the service on Wednesday. We started singing hymns on Wednesday. I worked a bit harder on the homily on Wednesday. We had discussion groups on Wednesdays. When I left that parish, it was not unusual to have between 40 and 50 people on a Wednesday. I was a bog standard traditional Anglo-Catholic priest. I trained at St Stephen's House, for goodness sake. We never talked about mixed ecology, I can assure you. I discovered later that I was running a Fresh Expression.

Let us get real. This is happening through parishes. I do not suppose there is a parish represented here which is not doing something like that. All we are saying is we want to do more of it. That is all we are saying. I believe we can do it, but we need to do it together and we need to resource it.

*The Chair:* Thank you, Archbishop.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Oh, and there is lots of evidence to support this as well.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* Thanks so much, Archbishop Stephen, and particularly for the stuff about language. I will remind you all that in 1985, *Faith in the City* said: let us have some ministers drawn from indigenous communities and trained in the language of their communities. I am a great supporter of mixed ecology. I have just got two cautions. One is ---

*The Chair:* Can it be a question, please, because we are running out of time.

*Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark):* Do you agree with me, Archbishop Stephen, that one of the dangers in talking about mixed ecology church is that we just forget or we just concentrate on the two hours and that mixed ecology church is about the whole of life.

My second point is that there is a bit of consumerism in some of the language, particularly paragraph 12 I think it is, about people being able to pick where they go. We need to remember that part of church is that we are a learning community and what we need to learn is the essential truths of the faith of Jesus Christ as we have received them through the creeds et cetera. So let us play down on consumerism.

*The Bishop of Islington (Rt Revd Dr Ric Thorpe):* Thank you, Archbishop, for sharing this part of the Vision and Strategy with us. I am really excited about it because the main focus of my work is to plant new congregations and encourage that throughout the Church of England. It is already happening and it is happening under our noses and has been for many, many years. There is a growing movement of particularly lay led congregations and new worshipping communities overseen by priests that is happening. It has been for

many, many years already. This ambition of 10,000 associates with 12,500 parishes. That means we can all be involved.

*The Chair.* Can we have your question, Bishop.

*The Bishop of Islington (Rt Revd Dr Ric Thorpe):* The question is how can we encourage, in the light of that number, every parish to be involved from every tradition in every place so that we can join in with this movement of God?

*Revd Dr Christian Selvaratnam (York):* Is the Archbishop aware of research on church health and church growth that observes that one characteristic of healthy churches that continue to grow is a significant act of giving away in mission every five years or so? It seems that the act of sending people and resources to new mission projects is an investment that every church can make in sustaining its continued missional growth.

Archbishop, how might we encourage this sort of spirit of generous mission and planting in all of our parishes, including those that maybe do not feel quite ready or feel a bit too small but who might, nevertheless, benefit from an act of sending in mission that benefits both those they send to and themselves as well?

*The Chair.* I invite the Archbishop up for the last time for a brief response.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Thank you for those questions. Christian, yes, I am aware of some of that research and, along with Adrian Greenwood's question, I want to make the connection between our desire to find ways of being church for more people in more places and our desire for us to be a church of missionary disciples. Therefore, both these questions seem to be about the life of the discipleship. I keep on quoting the opening sentences of the Rule of St Benedict who says, "I am setting up a school in the Lord's service".

That is my vision for our life together in our communities. This is the place where we learn what it means to follow Jesus and the more that happens the more we will learn these things. Yes, many of these things will be lay led. This General Synod passed a motion three years ago inviting every parish to think about starting something like this. Let us not forget our own history and the decisions we have already made. As I did not get a chance to say last time, this is not something new that we are trying that we will research later - we will research it.

This is firmly rooted in large bodies - this is for Rosalind - of research, particularly the really important anecdotal evidence but also the research that is done by the Church Army which I have the privilege to chair. Particularly, the Church Army research is really helpful and challenging on how many of these new initiatives are, through parishes, lay led and bearing much fruit. Thank you, Synod, so much, because I think that is it from me, is it not.

*The Chair.* Thank you and thank you, Synod. This completes Item 11 and we will now move to the next item of business.

THE CHAIR *Very Revd Andrew Nunn (Dean of Southwark)* took the Chair at 2.53 pm.

## **ITEM 12**

### **REPORT BY THE GOVERNANCE REVIEW GROUP (GS 2239)**

*The Chair:* Good afternoon, Synod. We move to Item 12, which is the Report by the Governance Review Group. This is a presentation. You will need GS 2239 for this item. It is a presentation, as with the last item, and so there will be the opportunity to ask questions following the Bishop of Leeds's presentation. I now invite the Bishop of Leeds to make it.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* You might be wondering why we are having a presentation rather than a debate. Well, a new Synod I think brings enough challenges, particularly for 60% new members to get to grips with how things work. So we decided it best to bring the presentation, let us have questions and get to the bottom of something that is really quite complicated, such as governance, and in just a few weeks' time in the New Year we will have an opportunity to debate it. By then we will have been able to drill down into some of the questions that are around. We have discovered in this work that it is not actually patently obvious to everyone how the policy of the Church of England works.

I hope that when we get to questions you will feel able to ask questions not worrying about if you will sound ignorant or if it will expose your ignorance. I can assure you that, even when we have spoken to quite experienced groups, ignorance emerges very fruitfully. The purpose of what we are doing is to enable us to carry on what actually is an iterative process. What we are presenting is a report. It is not a decision. It is not a conclusion. Things will develop and the comments and questions that emerge today will be taken on board as we go forward before the next debate at Synod.

I hope that you will recognise the limitations of this report and what it is as well as what it is not. The group was set up by the Archbishops and the House of Bishops to examine the Church's national governance structures and, if appropriate, to offer proposals for reform.

We started our work in August 2020. We concluded at the end of July 2021. It originally emerged from concerns exposed by an earlier review of a Church Buildings Council Report. It is important to note that the Governance Review predated both the pandemic and the initiation of what became the Emerging Church workstreams which bring together Vision and Strategy, Transforming Effectiveness and the Covid recovery work. It now forms part of that wider work in order to align with the Church's need to reshape for the future by bringing greater transparency, accountability, simplicity and accessibility and coherence to its governance structures.

I need to stress at the outset that the point of the review is to find practical ways in which refocusing the national structures and processes can relieve burdens on the diocesan and the parochial in order to enable local parishes and churches to flourish.

I am joined today by two members of the GRG who are also members of the General Synod who are up here with me: Bishop Helen-Ann Hartley, the Bishop of Ripon, and Joseph Diwaker, theologian and member of the Archbishops' Council. They will be feeding me the answers to your very profound questions.

So what is the problem? It is clear that the closer you get to the national centre of Church governance and administration, the more aware you become of some of the challenges to effectiveness. This is not because people are obtuse, but because this is what happens when governance structures grow and develop over time without regular and frequent review or reform. As the world around us changes, so must the framework in which we operate also adapt. Charity law does not stand still for 25 years, which is when the Church last looked hard at its own governance.

I am not going to waste Synod's time by repeating what I will take as read from the report itself, but let me summarise and contextualise the challenge, noting that in all the consultations we conducted we found not a single voice telling us that reform is neither needed nor urgent. Indeed, we constantly and consistently heard that the Church's current national governance arrangements do not serve it well. The complex structure of boards, commissions and committees with ill-defined and sometimes overlapping responsibilities results in a lack of clarity and decision-making, in poor engagement in consensus building, ineffective policy implementation and weak accountability to the wider Church. Apart from that it is brilliant. We give some specific examples in our report. The case for change was already compelling, but the post-pandemic challenges have added weight to the need for reform. Indeed, the Synod itself is unique and uniquely privileged.

The General Synod is the second legislative body of England next to the Houses of Commons and the Lords. We have that privilege by virtue of being the established Church of England. During your time on Synod you will be passing national law, not just Church law but national law which will be subject to Royal Assent. Being established by law gives us enormous privileges; for example, a national profile, a presence in every community, seats for Bishops in the House of Lords, an opportunity to represent every faith organisation at national level.

Over the years, and indeed the centuries, the Church of England's governing structures, which are both part of the state and also are separate from the state, have grown up and developed at different paces and in different ways in order to adapt to an evolving political, social and national environment. The General Synod - this may surprise you - is not a governing body. It is a legislative body, a parliament like the Houses of Commons and Lords.

The convocations, in which the clergy sit today as proctors in convocation, have their origins in the Anglo-Saxon Parliaments of clergy in pre-Conquest times - some of you may remember that. Over the centuries, the convocations have met to rule England in the medieval period, to enact the legislation involved in the Reformation and to discuss matters of Church and state in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The House of Laity in General Synod has its origins in the 19th century and became, first, a house of lay men

and during the 20th century a house of lay women as well. The Bishops, I think we have always been there.

Any institution, and particularly a Church which has grown up over several centuries, will have a complicated and highly fragmented set of governance structures. Many of these are good and they will work well like the traditional parish in many contexts. But tweaking elements over time inevitably increases complexity and opacity unless reviewed radically. At national level, the Church of England has seven governance bodies, currently collectively known as the National Church Institutions. After a year chairing the Governance Review Group, I can name every one of them: the Archbishops' Council; the Church Commissioners; the Church of England Pensions Board; the offices of the Archbishops at Lambeth and Bishopthorpe; the Church of England Central Services, which oversees some of the national operations such as finance, IT, legal and HR; the National Society, which oversees Church schools and education matters in England and Wales. Seven maybe to you sounds manageable. However, a recent rough count of all the committees and boards which are serviced by the staff team at Church House, London revealed 122 bodies.

For a Church which seeks for the sake of the Kingdom of God to be simpler, humbler and bolder, seven governing bodies and 122 subcommittees probably was not what Jesus had in mind when he commissioned Peter to the task of feeding and growing a church. Over the years, we have seen how this fragmented, many-faced, top-heavy national structure does not always serve the Church well. To be blunt, if the structure and policy is too hard for a member of today's Synod to recount and explain to a member of our congregations, then something needs to be done.

I well remember the last report which looked at the Church's national governance structures in the mid-1990s. The Turnbull Report recommended the creation of a single National Council and wanted to focus the activities of the Church Commissioners on asset management only, moving all other functions into the National Council. This did not happen in practice, mainly because the various vested interests defended their territories against the Turnbull proposals. The national governance arrangements we have now remain fragmented and unclear because we did not grasp that nettle at the time. I think - and I know I would say this - that the Governance Review Group recommendations are more nuanced and in tune with the practical needs of the Church than the Turnbull ones of the late last century.

We recognised that not all Church governance can be put into a single organisation. This was because of the some bodies come under separate jurisdiction: the Pensions Board, the National Society, the Independent Safeguarding Board which we have just set up, all because of the rationale for ringfencing the management of the historic assets. In the course of our work, the GRG examined a range of instances where the Church's fragmented national governance structures had failed. These included failures to implement work on church buildings mandated by General Synod; miscommunications between different governance bodies on ministry planning and, perhaps most devastatingly, a failure over decades by the Church's governance bodies to grip safeguarding and to protect the most vulnerable in our churches and communities.

The reality is that when the Church nationally faces a difficult or challenging issue or decision, it can all too easily fall between the gaps in our national governance bodies. The challenge addressed by Turnbull has not gone away. A vision for a more integrated and coherent national Church structure remains to be implemented. Had we done this sooner, I venture to suggest that some of our Church's failings might have been avoided or, at the very least, mitigated.

Let me summarise briefly the recommendations in the report. Firstly, and most importantly, we recommend the reduction in the number of governing bodies in the Church at national level by merging most of the national functions of the Church of England into a single national body, provisionally named Church of England National Services unless someone can give us a better name. Do not focus on the name. It is what it has to do that we have to work on first. This will be a charitable body established under charity law with a board of trustees comprising of a diverse and appropriately skilled and experienced group of clergy and lay people. We have made this suggestion because we wanted to enable the governance of the national Church to have a more unified vision and strategy. Yes, important words that we have just been looking at. We felt that this vision would be best delivered by a more unified governance structure.

We have suggested that legislation should be introduced to ensure what you might call a bonfire of the committees, a reduction of the large number of boards and committees which exist at national level costing money, time and energy. We have recommended that the National Services should be served by the minimum number of subcommittees necessary each with clear terms of reference and reporting lines into the main board. Secondly, we looked hard at the roles that bishops should play in our national governance structures.

Bishops are the historic leaders of the Church of England, playing a central role in our ecclesiology as pastors, teachers, evangelists and leaders. This is why we thought that the role of the College of Bishops in the national life of the Church should be enhanced. All bishops could potentially be involved in the national Church, not just those of us who are members of the House of Bishops of the General Synod. Having said that, it is not practical for the College of Bishops to form a separate governance body. At I think 113 members, there are just too many. We wanted these CENS to have a mixture of laity, clergy and bishops as well as having the right professional skill-sets that are needed on a modern board. So we suggested the creation of an elected board of bishops which could be the interlocutor between the bishops and the CENS and could also liaise with the other governance bodies. We had questions remaining about exactly how involved bishops should become in detailed technical projects and initiatives at national level. Bishops are called primarily to be pastors and spiritual leaders. They have a vital role in the mission and pastoral life within their dioceses and in the vision, strategy and policy of the Church of England.

How far bishops should be drawn into the detail of the day-to-day running of the national Church is less clear. We have suggested that there should be a review of the role of Lead Bishop and, if it is to continue, a role description should be developed which gives a much clearer definition of the expected contribution and demands of the role. If I can just interject there, there is a difference between leading and chairing.

Thirdly, there were some areas where the GRG recommended that independent governance arrangements should continue. After considerable debate, we concluded strongly that the management of the Church's historic assets should remain independent. The Pensions Board, the National Society and the new Independent Safeguarding Board have to remain independent since they have separate arrangements for their governance and oversight which would be difficult to unravel at this point. That is not to say that future developments will not revisit these decisions.

For example, the National Society also comprises Wales and so we cannot just unilaterally fiddle with it. But if the National Society were to come back and say, "We really think we ought to be part of this new body", then that will be the time to respond. I come to two of the recommendations in the report which I think, having followed social media, will be of particular interest to the General Synod. The first of these is the suggestion of a Nominations Committee. The current make-up of our boards and committees emphasises representation over skill-sets or competence, representation of constituencies, churchmanship and other categories often not owned up to. As we make clear, this is not in line with Charity Commission best practice under its seven principles of good governance which you can read in the report. That is not to say that our boards and committees do not contain many hugely gifted people, they very clearly do, but there remains a challenge in balancing representation, elected membership and relevant skills and experience by which we come to appointment.

For example, the Synod repeatedly calls for greater diversity. Can it deliver it? Has it delivered it? Representation is very important in connecting these bodies to the rest of the Church. But, at the same time, when we ask such bodies to take complex and technical decisions about finance, human resources, risk and many other things, we need to be confident that we have the best professional skills available to help them to do so. You know this from the boards and trusts with which you are involved in other charitable or business sectors. True diversity of membership is critical here morally and in terms of good business sense. While it would be untrue to say that elections cannot achieve diversity or match skill-sets to roles, they are not so specifically designed to do so as are well-run recruitment processes.

The GRG is clear that elected membership is here to stay, but we need to make the system work harder and we cannot duck this challenge. The Review Group would argue that the question of committee memberships also exposes a significant fault line in Church culture, namely that of trust. It seems we do not trust our governance bodies, however skilled, to carry out their jobs unless we have a range of people from our various parties and positions actually in the room even when much of the time the decisions that our boards and committees are making are ones where issues of churchmanship, tradition and other categories do not apply.

Secondly, I would like to speak to the GRG's recommendation that some thinking should be done on reform of the synodical system and then I will come into land. The General Synod was not one of the bodies that the Governance Review Group was asked to review, it was beyond our remit, and yet it came up again and again in the focus groups we ran with a wide range of grassroots voices from the parishes, cathedrals, TEIs and other

bodies. We spoke to young people, UKME people, ordained and lay, those with significant experience of Synod and the national Church operations and those without that experience. Almost without exception, what we heard was that Synod was seen as being out of touch, factional, dominated by parties and not representative of the concerns of the parish and the local church - and I recognise that we are elected by deaneries.

I would like to turn this suggestion over to you as the new General Synod with a predominance of new members. What kind of General Synod do you think that the Church needs in the future? How can this Synod help shape that vision? It would be wonderful if this Synod could start a journey of honest conversations both within itself and in the wider Church about just these kind of fundamental questions. The GRG only ever met on Zoom and was required to complete its work in one year, hence the proposals that you see in the report might not be perfect or complete, but they do (a) tackle the remit we were given and (b) take seriously the need to aim to reduce the number of governance bodies that the national Church has and to make the purpose of those that remain clearer to understand internally and externally - in other words, to make them more accountable, including importantly to the General Synod itself, and to cut costs.

Servicing seven governance bodies, a Church parliament and 122 committees gets expensive and it is the parishes who ultimately pay for much of these costs via the dioceses through the Parish Share.

The GRG wanted to make proposals that enabled reductions in overheads and the best most effective use of precious resources. I am grateful to the Group who devoted considerable time, passion, expertise, wisdom and argument - there was lots of that - to the work committed to us.

Before we turn to questions, I just want to return to lessons from the past, notably Turnbull. More could have been achieved 25 years ago and perhaps we might have avoided some of the problems we have experienced in recent years. Times have changed and so has the Church and so have public expectations regarding the governance standards expected of public bodies in the 21st century. Many of the Group's recommendations, if implemented, will not require legislative change, but for those that do the General Synod has a historic role to play in considering, amending and passing that legislation. No doubt many of our recommendations can be improved and will require further thinking and more detail. Indeed, we indicate in the report areas still to be considered or where there was not full agreement. But I urge you not to let history repeat itself. Do not let these proposals be torn apart by interest groups without thinking of the wider group of the Church.

You have the opportunity as a Synod to support the Church to build a coherent governance structure at national level. Indeed, if you do not like elements of our recommendations, then I would say do not just criticise them but offer constructive alternatives that will better serve the mission of the Church. If you do not like the answer to the question, provide a better answer, but no one is denying the question.

We started this journey 25 years ago. It is for us, the new General Synod, to continue that journey and shape the governance of the Church in such a way as to ensure that future generations will bless and not curse us for the decisions we make now. Thank you.

*The Chair:* We now invite questions. We are going to take these in batches of three and the Bishop of Leeds will then respond to those. There have been a few requests to ask questions.

*Mr Luke Appleton (Exeter):* Thank you very much, Bishop, for your presentation. My question is: is it possible to reform and simplify the Church without an increase in centralisation and, also, if there are issues within General Synod is there a possibility to address those issues without impacting on democratic representation?

*Revd Canon Mark Bennet (Oxford):* I wanted to address questions to two aspects of the report. First, on accountability. If this is truly to be a review of governance rather than a review of structures, do we not need a more extensive engagement with accountability than we are given in paragraph 65 of the report? And do we not need to do that also because accountability has been a presenting issue in both IICSA and the concerns about the Clergy Discipline Measure and also because accountability is a potential driver of the culture change which we need and which has been promised externally as well as internally? I ask this question and I am an accountant.

Second - and I hope this is taken in a friendly way because I have heard things to encourage me in this Synod - we heard yesterday and earlier today in questions and presentations about many of the things that the centre cannot or should not do and also about how our frontline is so important. It is really good to see vision highlighted as the first bullet in paragraph 136 as a thing that we should be attending to through our central bodies, but does not the vision as we also heard yesterday belong principally on the frontline? Negatively, if we have a central body ---

*The Chair:* Could you get to the question quite quickly, please.

*Revd Canon Mark Bennet (Oxford):* Yes, yes. Positively, could the responsibility for vision not be better stated as discerning resourcing and enabling the vision rather than developing, communicating and executing it?

*Revd Fr Thomas Seville (Religious Communities):* If I may express my surprise at the quality of this report, its acuity, its account of a fairly complicated structure, and I express my surprise also at the warmth I feel towards it. It is often said that the Catholic group is the group which always says no. I hope at least this one wishes to say a warm yes. I would like the Bishop if he would be so good as to comment on the relation between subsidiarity and the proposed new body, which seems to be one of the issues which perhaps I see is in draft form but in draft form as pencilled in rather than in with ink.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* The first question, Luke Appleton, about centralisation. This is not about centralisation. It is about clarification. Where you have the opacity that we have at the moment because of a plethora of bodies, it is easy to play in the gaps and the lack of ability most people have to - it came up this morning, did it not, in relation the budget: who makes the decisions? Where are they made? On what basis? By whom? What we are aiming at here, and I am not going to say we have got everything

right, is how we get clarification because clarification leads to greater transparency and transparency is key to accountability. That is what we have been aiming at.

On the question about democratic representation, we have been careful to try to ensure that that happens, that that is there, but we cannot duck the question of where democratic representation does not necessarily give you the particular skills you need or experience on bodies governed by charity law. That is the conundrum. There may be a better answer to it but that is the question we have got to address.

That feeds into Mark Bennet's question about accountability. I think I have just said really what I want to say to that, which is about transparency being the key to that and at the moment it is not transparent how the various bodies relate to each other. We have both the glory and the pain of the Church of England's dispersed authority. It provides a check and a balance but it also means that there is opacity.

The vision question I think really relates to what we in the group refer to as the wiring. How do the different groups we have relate to each other? How do we ensure in any future arrangement that the wiring is such that it is effective in communication and accountability but does not lead to a renewed opacity?

The third question from Fr Thomas about subsidiarity. Subsidiarity is a word that does not come up much in the report but came up much in our deliberations because we only want the CENS - which I said last night, if you end up becoming a member of that it means you being incensed, but you can take that as you like - to enable at national level only those things to happen at national level that have to happen at national level so important decisions are taken as close to the ground as possible. But we cannot have it both ways. We cannot demand subsidiarity and all that goes with that and then complain endlessly that we have not put in the right structures in order to enable the national body to do what they do effectively, efficiently and efficaciously.

*Canon Karen Czapiewski (Gloucester):* Thank you to the Bishop of Leeds and to the Working Group for the way in which this issue has been highlighted, analysed and has started to be addressed. At the risk of repeating points already made, and trying hard not to, it seems vital that we follow not only Christian principles and ideals in all we do but also that we comply with the Nolan principles of good governance. As a Church, we are entrusted with a wealth of resources to enable our mission.

As we heard this morning from John Spence, among those resources are high calibre staff of the type who are being headhunted, as well as beautiful buildings and wealth we seek to preserve for future generations. However, our current governance structures facilitate much of the work being carried out in silos. We need to be able to do the join-up that allows not only ---

*The Chair:* Could you ask the question, please, thank you.

*Canon Karen Czapiewski (Gloucester):* I would like to ask how are we going to guarantee that we can achieve that join-up in accordance with the Nolan principles and ensure that

we make best use of our resources in constructing Working Groups that are properly scrutinised?

*Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester):* Thank you for inviting my question. I have two brief ones. One, given that most if not all of those over 100 second tier bodies referred to in paragraph 148 on page 34 will regard what they do as essential, how does the Review Group propose to identify bodies which are not essential and dissolve them? That was my first question.

The second one is recommendation 3 about electing 12 members from the College of Bishops to form a Board of Bishops. How would those 12 members, assuming they are not all members of this body, stay in tune with God's work through this body?

*Ven. Mark Ireland (Blackburn):* When I served as an elected member of the Archbishops' Council, there was always a creative tension between the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops' Standing Committee particularly when it came to matters of Vision and Strategy. Coming back to Synod after a few years' absence, when I read this document I thought, well, clearly, the House of Bishops' Standing Committee has won that particular tussle, although it will be the College of Bishops rather than the House of Bishops' Standing Committee. But that does raise a question which I would like to draw you out on as to where the clergy and lay voices may lose out in their representation. Particularly, I think the issue revolves, as I heard you, Bishop Nick, around the tension between efficiency and ownership.

You raise the issue that if the popular elections do not produce people with the necessary skills for governance, there is an argument for more power to Nominations Committee, but by increasing their role and reducing the role of elections how will you avoid the unintended consequence of decisions being made by smaller groups of appointed people not being owned by the wider Church and particularly by the lay voices which are so important as we carry forward *Setting God's People Free*?

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* Karen Czapiewski, the Nolan principles are crucial. We heard them referred to yesterday as well. The seven principles of good governance which you find in the report you will find rooted in the Nolan principles. Any new arrangements that emerge from this must pay attention to the Nolan principles.

I was asked, I think by Karen, about guaranteeing the join-up in accordance with them. I ought to be quite clear, you cannot guarantee anything. Our report is about saying here is the direction of travel and, then, if the Synod eventually accepts or takes note of the report - whatever the process is - early in the New Year, then that is when the detail starts to get picked over and some of these detailed questions get attended to. That is when we really need to have the debates about how do you ensure and what looks good to one person might look holed beneath the water to someone else. That is what debate is for. This is iterative as we go, including today. But the whole point about setting up Working Groups means that they would have task and finish groups, if you like, rather than 122 committees and they would have a clear remit. People going on to them would have a clear role description, because at the moment many do not, and once the work was done they would cease.

It was suggested in a meeting last night that an important role of this Synod would be to scrutinise the work that CENS does and some of these groups, so there are practical ways of ensuring that scrutiny takes place. But, again, I would caution that sometimes things look very good on paper. You go in with the best intentions and then you discover as you go that they do not work. That is why we are here today.

Lisa Battye, 122 groups that deem themselves to be essential - I am not sure they all would, actually. It is not for the Governance Review Group to dissolve any of them. It is for the new arrangement, a new body, to decide what it needs. What we have put in the report is the basic committees that any charitable body needs now in order to be able to function and after that keep it lean and tight.

Again, we cannot complain that we are top-heavy but then not have a mechanism and the mechanism for doing it will be the responsibility of the new body, but then not have a mechanism whereby we actually get a bit ruthless. But the point is made that anyone and everybody believes their work to be essential. We are going to have to find a way of deciding whether they are or not.

The 12 members of the Board of Bishops. I just want to say on that that the underlying concern here is that the House of Bishops has very easily accrued to itself over time a finger in lots of pies in which it need not have a finger and, therefore, pulling it back to being what it actually is in law, which is a synodical House, seems to be a fairly radical thing. You could call it an example of a group saying "Maybe we are not as essential as we thought we were in every aspect of this work, let us try and be radical with this".

But the General Synod I think would continue to have an important role here because the role of the Board of Bishops is to simply make relationships and communication between the bishops and the other bodies as effective as possible. That will depend on who goes onto that board and how that mechanism is applied. I ought to say that what we are proposing with the Nominations Commission is that bishops would not be exempt from that. If a bishop was going to go onto a body that required a particular expertise, it would be for that body to recognise that the relevant bishops do have that expertise and if they do not that ought to be highlighted.

We are trying to be consistent. Again, it might not be the right mechanism. There may be a better way of doing this, but what we are trying to get on the table is let us find way of doing this. We have got to solve that problem.

Mark Ireland, the House of Bishops' Standing Committee has won. I am not so sure, actually, because what we are trying to do here is to reduce the top, if you like, the centre, and make it more streamlined and, therefore, to allow greater representation throughout the system that is there. This is why this synodical question is important and how we tackle what everyone thinks is dysfunctional about Synod but is very difficult to grapple with.

I do not think clergy and lay voices would be lost in representation because we are not saying we reduce elections. There would still be elections, not necessarily to every single

body, but because some of those would be task finish groups that are functional and able to get particular things done. The elections and the way you get on to those bodies will still come through the system. You could have people in your parishes saying, "Well, why do we trust you? You are elected by deanery synods to the General Synod but you are not representing my particular parish". At some point you have to say we trust those we elect and we appoint to act in good faith and we will learn as we go.

*Mrs Debrah Mclsaac (Salisbury):* I would first like to refer to the reference to General Synod as the elephant in the room and ask whether, given the longevity of an elephant's memory, that might have been an unhappily chosen expression in this context. The second thing I would like to refer to is paragraph 137, which describes this new body as being "a national vision and strategy setting body" and "a resource services organisation". I would like to know where the appropriate and robust institutional and representative checks and balances are to be found in these proposals?

*Revd Leslie Siu (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich):* Bishops in the Book of Common Prayer liturgy for consecration are called pastors of the Church, that they may diligently preach thy word and duly administer the Godly discipline thereof. To what extent do the proposed changes to governance have in mind to enable bishops to give themselves more fully to that work rather than just admin and bureaucracy?

*Revd Canon Bruce Bryant-Scott (Europe):* I want to thank the Governance Review Group for the remarkable piece of work that they have done and I am sure that we will benefit from the majority, if not all, of their recommendations. I speak as someone who is an outsider - although now, I guess, more as an insider being part of General Synod - a Canadian and someone in the non-established Diocese in Europe.

I have two questions. First, was any consideration made to look at other parts of the Anglican Communion or other non-Anglican churches to see what methods were working very well so that we can carry out the mission of God far more effectively than we have? There was a reference on page 14 to looking at the NHS, but for our mission in particular have we looked at effective places that are growing such as the Church of Nigeria or other places?

The second question - and this is maybe a bit of naive question - was there any consideration that we might let go of the Constantinian chains of establishment so that we might become a more humble, simple organisation that can let go, stop grasping on to prestige and power and empty ourselves into the incarnate form of Christ?

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* I really do not want to speak about elephants. Checks and balances, Debrah, you are absolutely right, essential to the work going forward will be the stress testing of any proposals that get worked up as to where the checks and balances are. That goes to the heart of the good governance principles and the Nolan principles, but we have to stress test them. It is in the next stage of that work where, if it gets the go-ahead, then specific proposals will come that need to be then tested out and that question about checks and balances will need to be there.

You need, for example, on any board to have - I am not sure what the right phrase is - an outside eye that has not bought into the internal culture, that is not enculturated, in order to ask the questions that the people on a board have got used not to asking. You know what I mean. That is why election to the CENS must deliver people who may be not completely experienced in the specifics of elements of that work but they are sufficiently engaged to be able to ask the really hard questions and to challenge the culture.

Leslie, how do we envisage enabling bishops to be pastors and to do all of that? If this works well, it will mean that bishops have more time, if they choose. We can all fill our time as we wish but we will have more space and more headspace to get on in our dioceses, which I thought was our job. But let us again not be naive about this, these come down to choices.

David, thank you. You refer to the Anglican Communion and non-Anglican churches, did we look at any of that. Yes, we did. But the thing you keep coming back to is the complexity of the Church of England because of establishment and because of the historic endowment. Again, if you want to get rid of all of that, I hope you were not speaking this morning demanding of the Church Commissioners money for this, that and the other because it all goes together. We have our engagement with Parliament. I will not say too much more about that, but if we were simply setting up the governance for a Church which other churches are looking at - the Methodists are looking at this at the moment as well - there is nothing like the Church of England genuinely. If you are going to really engage with governance reform, you have to take that uniqueness. It is not to defend it, it just is unique and we have to deal with that.

On the establishment, no, we did not look at should the Church disestablish. Our agenda was big enough. You will know, some of you at least, that when we set out on our work we also wanted to look at culture, not just structures and systems but culture and leadership, and we just did not have time to do it. I am just being completely open with you about that. We think they are integral to the work and lie behind some of the questions we have had, but we did not have the capacity or the time to address those questions. They have got to be addressed as we go forward and there has to be coherence.

But I would counter that I do not think establishment is simply about prestige and power. It is about something I referred to this morning. It brings to us an obligation, a missional obligation. I do not know any Bishop, for example, in the House of Lords who sees it as a bit of a jolly or the acceptance of prestige and power. We take it on as a massive obligation and often a huge burden which sometimes some of us feel we could do without, but we do it because that is what we are called to do that no one else is.

*The Chair:* I am going to take a final two questions.

*Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark):* Returning from yesterday's rather more dramatic intervention to my usual areas of good decision-making and governance. The long grass thing about Synod, I wonder if I could make a proposal that you might comment on.

We are about to elect the Standing Committees of the three Houses. It seems to me that the Synod is the body that needs to make decisions about the future of Synod. I wonder,

perhaps in about a year's time, whether it might be sensible, once we have all got our feet under the desk and new members of Synod are here, for the three Standing Committees to meet in a very serious way to consider this matter so that it does not get kicked into the long grass and that we pick it up and run with it alongside all the good work that the Governance Review Group will set in train.

*Mr Temitope Taiwo (London):* Thank you, Bishop, for that very comprehensive presentation. Much of what was spoken struck a deep chord within me and I would like to ask a question on the back of some of the recommendations. This question is grounded in my capacity as an ordinand and discipleship pastor of a church in an urban, creative and quite rapidly growing part of East London where I get the privilege of leading between two to three hundred young people in weekly Bible studies.

Many of these young people, who are young millennials and either unchurched or dechurched, have been struck on a weekly basis by the perspicuity of Scripture, often commenting on how rich, deep and - here is the key part - clear Scripture is to understand. However, when it comes to Church matters or how the C of E is governed, these same young people become extremely confused.

In light of this, my question is should the proposals to streamline the language, structures and bodies go ahead, what consideration has been or will be made to ensure that these changes are clear to and even informed by everyday young churchgoers who may love the Bible but today are utterly bewildered by the Church that was started in the Bible?

*The Chair:* A good place to finish. Bishop Nick, thank you.

*The Bishop of Leeds (Rt Revd Nicholas Baines):* Simon Butler, is not self-sacrifice at the heart of the Church's Gospel and should that not characterise our institutions rather than defending interests constantly looking at the wider interests of the others? Your proposal that the three Standing Committees meet in maybe a year's time is a very good example of the Synod taking responsibility for the Synod, not waiting to be reshaped by someone else, but it demands maturity and being grasped by a spirit of self-sacrifice in the greater interests of the whole.

As the next stage of the work gets moving, if that happens after the debate in February, then I would suggest that if the three Standing Committees do meet together they liaise then with that group so that there is some coherence and clarity of communication so we do not just go off on different tracks and then you end up putting all your energy and time into extinguishing fires that need not have been lit in the first place, which of course could not happen in ordinary church life.

Temi, it is great to hear stories of local growth and there are many of them. Let us not be shy about that. There are many struggles as well, but there are many examples of growth. How we communicate what happens at this level of the Church is sometimes a challenge. Communication is never simple. It is not just young people who are confused. But you cannot simply draw a straight line from the Bible to how a Church like this, given the complexity of our history and our development, ought to be governed. You might find the Nolan principles and the seven principles of good governance in the Bible - you can find

anything if you look closely enough and talk to the media - but there are not those straight lines.

The next stage of this project needs to be clear debate, including - and I hope, Temi, that you will keep pressing this - how do we translate this work into ways that can be understood. I used to be a professional linguist. This was my job, dealing with language, and it is pretty evident anything the Church puts out cannot be simply put out in one form. Something we might put in a paper to the General Synod is not necessarily going to be immediately comprehensible to some of the people I will meet in a parish on Sunday morning and nor can it be.

I remember Rowan Williams saying that, when we strive for everything to be simple - and I apologise to the Archbishop of York for this - not everything is simple. Some things are, by their nature, complex. We should not be shy about admitting that complexity but then finding ways of translating or, and I would suggest perhaps more relevantly, interpreting. They are different exercises, interpreting and translating, but interpreting in different languages at different levels seems to me to be essential.

The genius is going to be at what point and at what stage do you translate and interpret what? Do you wait until we have established something that looks like it is going to have some coherence or do you bang something out that is going to be out of date before it has gone and then everyone is confused because another iteration is going to come round and they go, "What is going on?" That is about tactics, it is about communication. I think that is probably enough before I do a lecture on language.

*The Chair.* Thank you, Bishop Nick, and thank you to everyone who has participated. As you know, we will hear a lot more about all of this. That brings this item to a close and we move next to Item 13, Farewells.

THE CHAIR *Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury)* took the Chair at 3.56 pm.

## **ITEM 13 FAREWELLS**

*The Chair.* Good afternoon again, Synod. Our first item is to invite the Bishop of Manchester to deliver a farewell to Dr Eve Poole, Third Church Estates Commissioner.

*The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker):* Thank you, Chair. Eve, sadly, is not able to be with us this afternoon. She has promised that she is going to be following this on the live feed - so, hi, Eve, up in Scotland wherever you are. It was last month that Dr Eve Poole stepped down as our Third Church Estates Commissioner but she has been a remarkable Commissioner. Such a unique blend of talents, experiences, motivations and styles and we have been very fortunate to have had them at our disposal in the last three and a bit years since her appointment by my colleague on my right here. Eve, is not so much a person of contradictions though but, rather, a uniquely drawn person with different but complementary facets.

Just a brief snapshot of her career will show us that. She actually began working life in the early 1990s as part of the 1 Millbank machine supporting the Commissioners' Pastoral and Closed Churches work. Some of us could go on a long discursion about the loss of 1 Millbank and the little restaurant down in the basement, but perhaps not more recent members. But she is great at, as well as the detail, creative leadership. She can see both the big picture and understand where that minute detail needs to be got right for the picture to actually emerge. Think of some kind of Juantiliste(?) artist, if you may. She went on to become the go-getting, high achieving, Deloitte management consultant, Ashridge Business school associate, not just with the MBA that we kind of might have expected but a PhD in Theology and Capitalism. For those of you who think that is a contradiction in terms, see me or Alan Smith later. She is also a very proud Scot, but one who is adept at working the English establishment.

But, most strikingly of all, this outstanding, compelling teacher, writer, speaker, whose favourite phrase is "let's have a natter", also really likes a jolly good listen. We have actually heard about listening quite a few times in this group of sessions, have we not, Synod, and Eve is an exemplar. That has shown itself many times, but none more strikingly than that long period of discussion that turned a report on cathedrals into the new Cathedrals Measure. Synod eventually agreed it almost unanimously. This Measure has made a huge contribution to the life of the Church and the nation. We need to remember how fraught the conversations were at the beginning. I remember being in this chamber when the then Bishop of Stepney first produced the report. That was not an easy debate.

It has been an extraordinary journey and key to it has been what one might call the energetic listening of Eve. She heard dissenters. She heard the hopes and fears of every cathedral. She heard eminent theologians who she personally gathered together. She heard Parliamentarians, members of Synod and many others and that got us over the line.

From her first day in office, she pushed for greater recognition of the unique place of cathedrals and for this to be recognised in national funding decisions. That resulted in an initial £10 million allocation to the Cathedral Sustainability Funding for this triennium and, then, when Covid struck us, she negotiated a further £10 million to replenish the fund. That helped cathedrals not only to survive but to develop. It enabled the Commissioners to respond very quickly to provide emergency funds to those most at risk. Her insistence on more imaginative use of national funding enabled match funding arrangements to provide a lifeline to those vital cathedral close heritage craft, things like music and the building skills for our amazing buildings.

Under her leadership, the Bishops' and Cathedrals Committees also pushed ahead with a See House Sustainability Project - they are coming to visit my house next week - and increased Bishops' use of electric and hybrid cars. Of course, she has expertly chaired our Mission, Pastoral and Church Property Committee in its complex quasi-judicial role and functions. When she started, this was two separate Committees, but she oversaw their merger and simplification - there is another favourite Synod word. Throughout this transition, it has handled a high volume of work ranging from exceptionally difficult and contested pastoral reorganisation cases to securing imaginative use for closed churches

and even the careful removal of some very special murals. All that has relied on that wide gift set, her thoughtfulness, her compassion and her ability to de-escalate contentious matters.

Eve also been a great driver of our diversity agenda, chairing the panels that produced exciting new appointments and initiating a successful outreach and pipelining event, the first of what we hope will be a series advocating for underrepresented groups in the workplace. She is, of course, something of a governance guru and has written extensively on that subject and that has helped focus our thinking on how we maintain and improve good governance. It has been helped by her endless supply of Tunnock's chocolate biscuits that she famously shared with all her visitors. I tried to find some in her office this morning, but she has taken them all back up to Scotland with her. I do hope and pray that Tunnock's can survive and flourish without her regular ferrying of copious supplies of their products across the Scottish border.

All of these achievements owe much to her persistence, her articulacy and her great care, a care for people, a care for ideas, a care for God's Church and its mission.

Synod, please pray for us as we seek out Eve's successor, but also let us hold in our prayers Eve, her husband, Nathan, and their twin daughters. Now that she has stepped down from her roles both here as Third Church Estates Commissioner and as the first ever female Chair of Governors of Gordonstoun School, we thank God that Eve will spend less time in transit between Edinburgh and London and that her family can enjoy more of her time, even if that overnight sleeper service has lost one of its most courteous, reliable and frequent customers. But, of course, we will, we do already, Eve, miss you very much.

*The Chair.* I would like the Archbishop of Canterbury to deliver the farewell for Caroline Boddington, the Archbishops' Adviser on Appointments.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* Caroline was appointed to the role of Archbishops' Appointments Secretary in 2004. Tony Blair was the Prime Minister and, as you know no doubt all remember, the top Hot 100 song of the year was Yeah! by Usher featuring Lil Jon and Ludacris. I will not sing it. In many ways, Caroline has been a devoted servant of the Church not just over those 17 years but for years and years and years before that in her faithful service in the choir in a church in London and her own deep Christian faith.

When she was appointed, there was some concern that she was bringing the commercial world to the Church, having worked previously with British Gas. Those of us who worked in the oil industry a bit earlier and had to deal with British Gas would scarcely have had that fear but we would have certainly feared their tyranny. However, those of us who have had the privilege of working closely with Caroline know that her faith is central to her life and she is a theologian in that she says her prayers and is committed to the wellbeing of the Church.

I first met her quite shortly after her appointment at which point, with unusual prescience, she said she could not ever see me being any good as a bishop but I might be of some value as a dean. She was, of course, entirely right. It is hard to exaggerate the gratitude

that we owe to Caroline. She has overseen a word - which I will come back to is next in my notes, but I will come back to it; it begins with P and ends in S and has two other S's and a C in it, and I will leave you to think about that - for appointing all the diocesan Bishops and Archbishops across the Church of England - all the diocesan Bishops and Archbishops across the Church of England. It is not for nothing that some years ago a very well-known weekly newspaper, I think, declared her to be the most powerful person in the Church of England.

She has also appointed almost all the deans and many other senior appointments, both clerical and lay. When I say she has appointed, I mean she has appointed. The word I missed out was the word "process". The first Queen Mary said that when she died Calais would be found inscribed on her heart. With Caroline, it would be the word "process" and this brings me to a confession - I am into confessions this week. She has had to deal in her second Archbishop of Canterbury - but her fourth Archbishop, I think - with someone for whom the word "process" was perhaps not his favourite word in the dictionary. Hers unquestionably is the word "process".

As a result, as Archbishop Stephen would recognise and Lord Sentamu would also recognise, there have been many occasions when halfway through a CNC or a CNC process - you see, you have got me doing it now, so you have succeeded, Caroline - she said, "But, Archbishop, the process is", and I have said, "I am not going to follow the process" and have gone deliberately and consciously forward ignoring the process. At which point, she has said, "But, Archbishop, the process" and we have ended up following the process. She is, indeed, the most powerful person in the Church of England.

Simply noting though her capacity for overseeing the complexity of our appointments, which I am often asked about, I was in Africa on one occasion just after I had been nominated to this role but before it actually took place. I will not say where it was but in a particular country in Africa and I was invited, because I had been nominated to this role, to some gathering of the great and the good. There was a very senior member of the establishment there, very close to the head of that country, and he had obviously come along under sufferance, was bored stiff by talking to me - you may know the feeling - and he said, "How do you become Archbishop of Canterbury?" So I explained and he grew more and more glazed. But I knew the process, Caroline. I explained it well.

He looked more and more bored, even more bored than I was. I then said, "It ends up with you being elected by the College of Canons of the Cathedral", and he brightened up. He said, "Oh, we've just had an election here and I ran the election campaign. When is your election?" I said, "Next Thursday" - it was about six days later - and he said, "Shouldn't you be campaigning?" I said, "No, there's only one candidate and it's something approaching treason to vote against them if you're a Canon". And he sat back in his chair and said, without a touch of humour, "Now that is the kind of election I like". It was, moreover, the kind of election he organised. He and Caroline would have got on well.

She oversaw a rigorous process which led to an election with one candidate and it was against the law to vote against them. Bear that in mind next time you are talking to her. She has worked well with colleagues right across the Church. She is extraordinarily

insightful. She spots quickly and powerfully people's strengths and weaknesses. She has been instrumental in putting forward ideas about the projects others were leading on and in being invaluable, and here I am not for once being ironic, in areas way beyond her own area of responsibility.

She understands the hows of Government not just the what of governance, how you make it work, and that is an invaluable skill. She has worked closely with the Prime Minister's Office under five Prime Ministers and, as I have said, a number of Archbishops.

It was, of course, during her time that one of our great successes in training was put together. It was a bid for the resources to set up the SLDP (Senior Leadership Development Programme) and to begin work with clergy to health them in their ministry and their spiritual life. The work done was not universally acclaimed by all, as any who remember the Green Report will recall. It has, however, under her leadership developed superbly and it was very striking to see the number of people coming through that process in cohort after cohort, deeply formed and enthusiastic about their training programme. It is a deliberately disruptive programme enabling people to be forced to think again.

To quote two people who had gone through it, they said "parts of it were messing with our heads" - a very helpful thing to do - and someone else said "one part of it took us to the edge of words". Caroline, your team was instrumental in the profound development - and you led that - of those people. It is a huge gift. Caroline has advised on a wide range of appointments, not only clerical ones. She has been instrumental in constantly reviewing the work of the Crown Nominations Commission and, most recently, she was a key part of the O'Donovan Report on responsible representation. All the reforms she has overseen have been done with thoroughness and high quality and also been driven by her own sense of building on what God wants and striving to discern the right thing to do.

There have been other appointments that she has made. Of course, the most significant of them was when she came across a certain then suffragan bishop who is now her husband. In terms of process, that is a more questionable process but it seems to have been one of the most delightful and excellent ones which we rejoice in. Alastair Refdern and Caroline were and are a formidable couple and worked together on issues relating to vocation and what it means to be a bishop and how it can be lived out.

Caroline, we now say thank you. No words are adequate to express our thanks for your extraordinary service before your appointment and since your appointment and, I have no doubt in the future, in your continuing vocation. For all the ways in which you have helped shape the future of the Church, I hope and pray genuinely and deeply and with much gratitude for your occasional lectures on process, privately and publicly, for our occasionally reasonably robust discussions, which I always lost, I give thanks to you for that and for the training you have given me, without me always being aware of it and certainly not always sufficiently grateful for it. We know your love of music and choral work and we know that you have taught the Church to sing better in tune with the spirit of God in its searching for appointments to those who have an impact on so many.

Thank you and may God bless you in all you continue to do in his name. Please do stand, Caroline.

*The Chair:* I now invite the Archbishop of Canterbury to deliver the farewell to the Bishop of Lincoln, Christopher Lowson.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* Christopher Lowson has been ordained for 44 years. He served first in parishes in the Southwark Diocese before moving to Portsmouth Diocese where, as well as serving in parishes, he then became Archdeacon of Portsdown in 1991. He moved from Portsmouth to become Director of Ministry in Church House in 2006 and was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln in 2011. Inevitably, the extraordinary events that Christopher has endured over recent years have made an impact upon him and upon the diocese and, indeed, upon the whole Church.

When I met with Christopher earlier this year, he made it very clear that he was sorry for the events and did apologise for the wrong he had done. I also made it very clear that I was sorry for the way the matter had been handled by me and the length of time it had taken to come to a conclusion and, including that, the length of time that he had suffered suspension. I want to say that sorry again now in public with both Christopher and Susan here. I apologise again for that terrible period of your lives together for which I feel a deep personal responsibility. Of course, because survivors will hear this, in no way do I retract anything on the absolutely central place of safeguarding for the Church of England, something which Christopher would agree with me on, past, present and future. Survivors matter. Fundamentally, survivors in Lincoln matter fundamentally. They suffered and must be central.

But our failures historically in safeguarding and profound injustice in those failures do not excuse delay in cases like Chris. Clearly, there is much work still to do in reforming the Clergy Discipline Measure and reviewing our processes and I hope that it is a very tiny bit of comfort for Christopher and Susan in knowing that their grim experience will help us think more deeply about that and I trust more kindly.

The words from those in the diocese which sum up the ministry exercised by Chris are warmth, generosity and creativity. He is always willing to think and explore outside the box and to take risks, transforming the governance of the diocese where he inherited a very, very difficult situation and leaving on a sound organisational setting. He was well aware of the complexities of the communities that make up that very remarkable historic diocese: its rural nature, its urban coastal estates and market towns. It is impossible to stereotype it in any way at all.

He had a real and genuine passion, and has, and desire for the Gospel and to see lives and communities transformed by the person of Jesus. One example of that was the setting up of the Bishop of Lincoln's Social Justice Fund which has seen a million pounds released to social justice projects across the whole of Greater Lincolnshire. One colleague told me of listening to you, Chris, as you talked about the Cross to a group of clergy at a breakfast meeting, a breakfast meeting called to think about giving, a meeting which was repeated about a dozen times and each time you had tears in your eyes as you tried to express what that meant for Christ and what it meant to you. The Lincoln

Diocese has many issues to grapple with and Christopher has been clear in leading the diocese about his own view of ministerial priesthood and the nature of the Church.

During his time as Director of Ministry, the whole Church benefited from the wisdom and experience Christopher brought to that vital role. He asked the important questions and worked to support the bishops and the Church right across the country. It was typical of him that, during his time in Church House, he was also a priest vicar of Westminster Abbey, ensuring his own ministerial life was maintained and his involvement with the wider Church.

Christopher and Susan will retire to London at the end of this year and Christopher will continue to be connected to the local church. I am sure he will also keep connections with the wider Church as well and I hope and pray that we will be able to use his experience and wisdom in the future.

During his time as Bishop of Lincoln, the diocese has been working towards what it means to be sustainable and the vision now for the diocese is a time to change together. Christopher has been leading on this vision and, of course, also challenging all in the diocese to consider their own sense of discipleship with three words which they use: faithful, confident and joyful. Christopher has a passion not only for teaching but also for studying, having gained a Masters from Heythrop College in 1996 and the LLM in Cardiff in 2003. He has served on the Clergy Discipline Commission and the Legal Advisory Commission.

Christopher and Susan, this Synod wants to say thank you to you and to wish you well in your retirement. It has been more than a difficult few years and we cannot ignore the reality of what you have endured and the impact it will have had on you and the Church. But at this stage I want to thank you, to acknowledge your faithful service, to acknowledge your heart turn towards Christ, to acknowledge your discipleship and to pray that in your continuing pilgrimage and ministry that God will bless you in all that you do.

*The Chair.* I now invite the Archbishop of York to deliver the farewell for the Bishop of Newcastle, Christine Hardman.

*The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell):* Christine and Roger, how nice also to see you both in the gallery. As I begin this farewell, I am very conscious, Synod, that we might be witnessing a moment of history in the life of the General Synod. Why? Because this is actually Christine's second Synod farewell. The other was given by my predecessor in July 2014. On that occasion, this body was thanking Christine for her 14 years on Synod and her role as Prolocutor of the Province of Canterbury and wishing her a long and happy retirement. Well, it has not turned out like that.

Christine, you do not make many mistakes but maybe at this point, as the old joke has it: how do you make God laugh? Answer: tell him your plans. Christine maybe you thought you knew what the future held but, of course, as we know to our great delight, God had other plans and 18 short months later Christine was consecrated Bishop of Newcastle, becoming the first female diocesan Bishop in the Northern Province.

Of course, being first is something we have come to expect from you, Christine, because you were among the first wave of women to be ordained to the priesthood back in 1987. You were the first woman to serve as Prolocutor of the Province of Canterbury and the first female Bishop to be a season ticketholder for Newcastle United. By the way, they are still going to need your prayers.

Six years might not seem very long but, brothers and sisters, if you want an example of what a Bishop can achieve in a relatively short space of time, look no further than the Newcastle Diocese. Christine, your ministry has been a joy and absolutely transformative. You have had such an influence on our Church and on our lives. You have enabled your diocese to become much more outward facing, rooted in the reality of the circumstances it finds itself, whether that is the vibrant city of Newcastle or the rural parishes weaving their way across Hadrian's Wall or the liminal replenishing tranquillity of Holy Island with all its heritage, the inspiration and example of Aiden, of place and pilgrimage. But, regardless of the location, the Newcastle Diocese, as I have come to now in my so far fairly short time in the Northern Province, is so alive, alive with a desire to reach and serve people where they are, at whatever stage in life and always with the love of Christ, the joy of the Gospel, a message of hospitality and hope in a part of our country which is so often overlooked, a place where there is great deprivation and suffering and where there needs to be investment and opportunity and, as I shall come to in a moment, what a champion for the North East you have become.

But, Christine, you have also made a massive contribution to our national Church life. You have served on too many to mention groups of our Church of England, including the Steering Committee for women bishops' legislation, Spending Plans Task Group, the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops' Steering Committee to name just a few. All of them have benefited from your commitment and wisdom. In the past, you often explained legislation to the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament. Now, in the House of Lords, you scrutinise that legislation, always bringing to your work tenacity, faithfulness and a great desire to get things done.

Let us not also overlook the hugely important work in recent years of the Pastoral Advisory Group which Christine oversaw, perhaps born of the many struggles that her generation faced. As the legislation for the ordination of women as priests and then bishops made its way through the Church, Christine, you have helped us see how we can honour, love and respect one another with our differences.

In my experience of serving with you and knowing you as a friend, it is your tenacious and robust kindness which is one of the greatest gifts that you have brought to the Church you love. Christine, you are nothing if not energetic. I am reliably informed that most of your mornings begin with a run. I have also been told that on your run you listen to Ed Sheeran. I will not hold that against you - well, not today. But, then, of course, it is morning prayer and here, as one of the pioneer generation of female priests and bishops and, Synod, it is so important for us to understand that. Christine is one of the great pioneers of our Church in the last 30 or 40 years.

I want to pay tribute to your spiritual vision, your love of Christ, the way your life and ministry is sustained and replenished through your relationship with Christ in word and

sacrament. Your love for the outdoors is well-known, although not always appreciated by members of your Bishop's staff. I am told residentials include an obligatory walk - or as it is known by them, "The Bishop's route march".

Christine, the Diocese of Newcastle will miss you. The staff in your office will miss you. I know they have enjoyed teaching you the correct Geordie pronunciation of the names of parishes in the diocese and you have learned those lessons well.

You have become such a valued part of the North East that, Synod, you may not know, the City of Newcastle recently honoured Christine by making her the first ever faith leader to be granted the Freedom of the City. What a tribute.

Christine, my dear friend, this is the impact you have had, truly showing how the Church can be the Church for the entire nation not just itself. In Newcastle and in Northumbria, you have established so many good relations across government, business and the third sector and they will miss you. Colleagues across the Northern Province, the entire College of Bishops, we will miss you. Your candour, intellect, spiritual and pastoral gifts have so blessed our Church of England. Somebody has peeked into your blue file. On a certain BAP Report many years ago, it said that Christine would be a great asset to any parish staff. Forty years later, we say a very big amen to that. You have not just been an asset but an absolutely remarkable presence in the life of the Church and to God's mission.

So, Christine, my dear sister, for the second time we wish you and your beloved husband, Roger, who has always been such a wise and trusted companion and support to you in your ministry, a really enjoyable retirement. I had not actually finished. I had a marvellous last line which was simply to say, Christine, do not forget there will be more.

*The Chair:* Our meeting of the House of Laity will take place in this chamber commencing 15 minutes after prorogation. In order for the chamber to be set up for that meeting, can you, after the prorogation, leave the room as quickly as possible.

## **ITEM 14 PROROGATION**

*The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby):* Members of Synod, for the two-thirds of you who are new, prorogation is the cue for being led by the former Bishop of Newcastle on a lengthy walk around the centre of London, so if you would quickly go down and meet out the front in your running shoes. It is just about as likely as what I am about to say.

Prorogation will be followed by a prayer and a blessing.

*The Archbishop of Canterbury* prorogued the Synod