

Report of Proceedings 2017

**General Synod
July Group of Sessions**

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Full Synod: First Day Friday 7 July 2017

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* took the Chair at 2.31 pm.

The Chair. Good afternoon, members of Synod. I would like to thank those who are leading the continuous praying presence for Synod today. The day will start with a short period of worship led by the Synod Chaplain, Revd Michael Gisbourne, after which the first item of Synod business for today will begin. We are in your hands.

Revd Michael Gisbourne (Chaplain to the General Synod) led the Synod in an act of worship.

ITEM 1 INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair. We come to Item 1. Two Bishops will not be present at this group of sessions: the Rt Revd Dr Pete Wilcox, Bishop of Sheffield replacing the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft; the Rt Revd Peter Eagles, Bishop of Sodor & Man replacing the Rt Revd Robert Paterson. Also, I want to announce that Revd Clinton Langston also will not be here from the Armed Forces, replacing now the new Bishop of Sodor & Man.

In a moment, I am going to read out the names of the new members of the Synod or those here in a new capacity. Please, would they stand in their places when I mention their names and remain standing so that we can greet them all with applause at the end?

The new members are: Revd Caroline Ralph, Bath & Wells, replacing the Ven. Andy Piggott; the Revd Canon Martyn Neale, Guildford, replacing the Revd Dr Philip Plyming; Mr Richard Jones, Salisbury, replacing Ms Christine Corteen; Ms Tracey Byrne, Southwell & Nottingham, replacing Canon Pam Bishop. May we please greet them all with applause?

ITEM 2 WELCOME TO ANGLICAN AND ECUMENICAL GUESTS

The Chair. On the Archbishop of Canterbury's behalf and on my behalf and the rest of Synod, we welcome our new ecumenical representatives. We also welcome a new ecumenical representative, the Revd Dr Andrew Prasad, United Reformed Church. May I invite you to stand so that we can greet you? There are three ecumenical guests who are attending just for the group of sessions, including three Anglican ones. They will be seated on the floor of the hall to the left again. Please greet them in the same way.

In addition to our nine ecumenical representatives who are with us at each group of sessions, in July we always have some additional Anglican and ecumenical guests. Like the nine ecumenical representatives, they attend on one occasion only and do not have the right to speak. If you ever wanted to be in purdah, this is it. I am going to ask them to stand and invite you to greet each one of them in turn when I have introduced them.

On this occasion, we welcome the Rt Revd Dr Matti Repo, Bishop of Tampere of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland. The Revd Dr Matti Repo has been the Bishop of Tampere of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland since 2008. Previous appointments included serving as an Executive Secretary for Theology in the Church of Finland's Department for International Relations, which involved responsibility for dialogue with other churches.

During this time, he also served as the Lutheran CORE Secretary of the Porvoo Contact Group. A participant in domestic and international ecumenical dialogues with Anglican, Orthodox, Catholic, Methodists, Baptists and Pentecostal traditions, he has been a member of the Churches in Dialogue Commission of the Conference of European Churches and as an adviser to the Council of the Lutheran World Federation. We are going to greet him again, and I will say to him, *kiitos paljon*.

The Rt Revd Dr Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh, Scottish Episcopal Church. Dr Armes has been the Bishop of Edinburgh in the Scottish Episcopal Church since 2012. Prior to this, he was Rector of St John the Evangelist Church, Princess Street, Edinburgh, and Dean of the Diocese of Edinburgh. Before moving to Edinburgh in 1998, he was Area Dean of Rossendale and priest-in-charge of Goodshawe and Crawshawbooth in the Diocese of Manchester. Again, may we greet him, please?

Ralf Meister, Landesbischof from Hanover, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover. Ralf Meister is the Landesbischof of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hanover, which is one of the largest Landeskirchen of the Evangelical Church in Germany. Previously, he served as a General Superintendent of Regional Bishops in Berlin. He has also worked in the Department of Political Theology at the University of Hamburg and has been a longstanding contributor to religious broadcasting on German radio. He is the Co-Chair of the Meissen Commission, which is responsible for developing the commitment between the Church of England and the Evangelical Church in Germany under the Meissen Agreement. May we again, please, greet him?

It is with great delight that I invite Bishop Matti Repo of the Church of Finland to deliver a greeting to the Synod on behalf of the ecumenical guests. Bishop Matti, you are expected to speak for ten minutes, but you are not going to be speaking later on so it is all right.

The Bishop of Tampere (Rt Revd Dr Matti Repo (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland)): Your Grace, on behalf of the ecumenical guests, let me express our gratitude for your kind invitation to take part in this session of the General Synod. We are thankful

for the hospitality you have welcomed us to enjoy and we are most interested in following the work that Synod is to undertake. I am particularly happy to bring you greetings from the Lutheran Churches in the Porvoo Communion because the Porvoo Declaration quite recently had its 20th anniversary.

This year, we are also commemorating 500 years of the Reformation. The *Ninety-Five Theses* Dr Martin Luther published in 1517 were intended to fuel a theological debate but, over and above that, they sparked a process with far-reaching ecclesial and political implications. Today, we lament the schism that resulted but, at the same time, we witness new steps toward unity in the whole of the Western Church.

A recent milestone of ecumenism is the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. It was agreed by the Lutheran World Federation at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in 1999 and, subsequently, adopted by the World Methodist Council in 2006 and by the World Communion of Reform Churches this week, only two days ago.

The Anglican Consultative Council affirmed its substance a year ago. We see that the Joint Declaration is evolving into one of the most widely accepted ecumenical agreements. It will unite churches in the conviction of salvation through faith in Christ. Last year, the Anglican Consultative Council also endorsed the churches to join in the commemoration of the Reformation under the same topic as the Lutheran World Federation.

The Lutheran World Federation had its General Assembly this May in Namibia under the heading, “Liberated by God’s Grace”. The overall topic covered three subthemes, “Salvation not for sale; Human beings not for sale; Creation not for sale”. The three “not for sale” subthemes sound like a distant echo of the Reformation era *solas*, like *sola fide*, *sola gratia*, *sola scriptura*, *solus Christus*: Through faith alone; by grace alone; Scriptures only; solely for Christ.

The “not for sale” themes brought the Lutheran community together to work on issues common to all. Salvation in Christ is the key to understanding what liberation by God’s grace means. The dignity of all human beings is underlined: all beings created in the image of God and redeemed by the Son of God. The integrity of Creation is to be valued by all.

Global problems like climate change challenges all nation states and churches alike. Lately, many European nations have been hit by terrorism. We have been shocked by the recent acts of violence in Britain. Lamenting the loss of life and praying for the victims, we, as your ecumenical partners, stand in solidarity with you as you continue your work for reconciliation, peace and justice. Among the more intimate questions the churches tackle today are those related to marriage and sexuality. As you very well know, many of the Nordic Lutheran churches have adopted the policy to marry same-sex couples.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland has not taken this step, but the issue is presently under debate in our Synod. No changes in the policy or in the liturgy have been made. Nevertheless, a new awareness of the variety in human sexuality has arisen, as well as a new sensitivity to minorities and a stronger emphasis to be an inclusive Church. At this point, the Bishops' Conference has issued pastoral guidelines for an informal prayer together with same-sex couples who have married at a civil register.

There seem to be at least two vantage points to embark on a discussion. One is the notion of human dignity and the equality of all, plus the pastoral care and spiritual support of vulnerable people. The other is the meaning of liturgy. What does the Church mean when she offers services and conducts them in the name of the Triune God? By doing that, the Church indicates that she believes she does the work of God. She participates in the work of Father, the Creator; Son, the Redeemer; and Spirit, the Sanctifier.

To make it look simple, on the one hand there are the needs of human beings and, on the other hand, there is the mission of Christ given to the Church. These need to be kept together. The Church has to reach out to people with the Gospel in order to take part in the new Creation God is bringing out. The difficult questions call on our churches to work together. We share similar challenges in Northern Europe. We are members of the same family.

Now that Britain is preparing to leave the European Union, it is even more important for the churches to strengthen their relationship. Unity in Christ is deeper and more substantial than any political or financial union. The Church of Christ surpasses all boundaries, even where human efforts for integrating states do not prove successful. As Christians, we share the same vocation to witness to God's love in the power of the Holy Spirit. May God bless you and guide you in your work.

The Chair. Bishop Matti Repo, thank you very much for your address. Again, as you would say in your own language, *kiitos paljon*. Thank you very much. That concludes this item.

THE CHAIR *Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 2.53 pm.

ITEM 3

REPORT BY THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE (GS 2060)

The Chair. Good afternoon, Synod. We now move to Item 3, the Report by the Business Committee, for which you will need to have sight of GS 2060. There are a number of people who have put in to speak to this item and we have quite tight time limitations this afternoon. After the Chair has spoken for her allotted ten minutes, I will only be allowing a time limit of three minutes for speakers, once the floor is open, to debate. I now call upon the Chair of the Business Committee to speak for not more than ten minutes.

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): I beg to move

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

Well, friends, it is good to see you again. I think I should start by thanking you for allowing me to continue to juggle that combination of delight and despair that is the lot of the BC Chair. The programme for our days together in York has changed shape so that it more closely resembles days in London, with two main sessions for formal business from 9.00 am to 12.30 pm and 2.00 pm until we worship together at 7.00 pm.

The provision of food at fringe meetings was proving unsustainable and significant feedback from you last summer suggested an appreciation of eating together across the whole breadth of Synod. We hope this new pattern will offer greater opportunity for rest, fellowship and reflection, as well as meeting and learning together. We hope you will agree that the Agenda for this group of sessions contains a good balance of legislative and deliberative business.

It is not precisely the form of Agenda that was published immediately following our meeting in May, as, thanks to the Presidents, we have the opportunity to debate a motion of concern to us all about the state of our country. We shall also have the opportunity to hear from the various pastoral and mission initiatives at national level that support our parishes and we shall be kept informed about the work of Presence and Engagement, the review of the CNC, and the work of the House of Bishops on issues around human sexuality, as well as taking both Diocesan Synod Motions and Private Members’ Motions.

Not all this work can be achieved effectively by debate and, since everything in Synod that is not a debate is a presentation, I admit that there are a number of presentations. However, I trust that you will recognise and appreciate the variety and style of these. As ever, you will have questions about the Agenda and I look forward to your calling us to account.

How many Anglicans does it take to change a light bulb? The traditional answer is: “Change?” Maybe in this case the answer could be nine or 467.

You will see from our Report that the Presidents, together with the Archbishops’ Council, have encouraged the Business Committee to continue with, and indeed to step up the work that we began in the last quinquennium about changing the culture of Synod.

This Synod is costly for each of us and for the Church, financially in terms of time and resources, and in the way that it takes us away from our daily lives, mission and ministry. We want to make sure that this investment - financial, emotional and spiritual - is well spent for the good of the Church and for our communities to which we minister.

Earlier this year the Simplification Task Group reported the outcome of a Synod reform scoping exercise to the Archbishops' Council. In its proposed terms of reference, the Report highlighted three key areas: communication and the need to improve Synod's engagement with the wider Church and amongst key audiences; improving the participation of lay, young and BAME members of our Church; and enabling Synod to support the Church's wider agenda of mission and growth.

Over the past few years, working with the Presidents, the Business Committee has taken steps to address your concerns relayed to us in a fringe meeting a couple of years ago. We have used several methods to introduce topical debates working within our Standing Orders. The Committee shares the feeling expressed by the Simplification Task Group that change should be effected by using the flexibility of Standing Orders rather than engaging in protracted work to change our legal structures. However, this is the moment to consider what change is necessary and to identify the proper means to achieve it.

I would like to invite you to hear more about this work and to share your views at the Business Committee fringe meeting. It is on Saturday evening at 8.30 in room PT/005. I would just issue a word of warning. Our budget only stretches to orange juice and water so if you would like to bring something to drink that is more conducive to chat, please bring it with you.

Our intention is to make our work together purposeful and effective. An example of recent work that seeks to enable this is the revised Code of Conduct, which is the subject of current consultation. The Business Committee has had policies in place for a while on declarations of interest and the behaviour of Synod members towards staff and contractors. As part of our work we have been drawing together existing policy as well as responding to concerns about Synod members' behaviour towards one another. Most bodies similar to ours have some kind of code of conduct, either voluntary or otherwise, for their members. GS Misc 1162 is the Business Committee's first draft of a Code of Conduct, which is intended to be voluntary.

In order to ensure that fringe and displays comply with health and safety, employment legislation and the requirements of our venues, we have also reviewed the fringe and display policy. Following the review, we have introduced some eligibility criteria. It is important for all of us to understand that, in contrast with comparable events elsewhere, the Church and the dioceses subsidise our fringe and displays through funding the staff who administer them and by covering parts of the costs in the wider event budget. Consequently, we need to ensure that the widest possible range of views, consistent with the ethos of the Church of England, are expressed in these.

As ever, there are a number of housekeeping issues that I would like to draw to your attention. We review security here regularly and we have not been advised of the need to make any changes following those introduced last year. As always, I want to urge you to remain vigilant and to make things easier for security staff by ensuring that you do not

leave your belongings unattended and that your passes are visible at all times. We do not want to waste time with unnecessary security alerts nor have innumerable items consigned to the black hole of lost property.

Now for some good news. I am pleased to let you know that there will be no need for you to keep the dates that you have reserved for November in your diary. You may want to keep that a secret from some people.

I cannot end this Report without thanking my colleagues, the other members of the Business Committee, each of whom brings a wealth of experience to our work. We would all do a poorer job without the staff who support us with unfailing generosity, and I think everyone would want me to thank Nick Hills, whose last Synod this is, for his many years of work supporting this particular Committee. Thank you, Nick, and Godspeed.

The Chair. This item is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Chair, I would like to commend the Business Committee for its ongoing changing the culture of General Synod programme. I think this is critically important if we are to maintain the respect of those both in and outside the Church. Many watch how we conduct our business with incredulity, especially over some of our more contentious issues. I was therefore both relieved and encouraged to read the draft Code of Conduct for Synod members referred to in paragraphs 78 to 80 of this Report. For someone who has been the subject of very upsetting personal and public attacks on myself and, at times, my family by fellow Synod members over the past few months, I was also glad to see the proposal incorporate a section on conduct on social media.

I would, however, like to make a few suggestions that I hope the Business Committee, and indeed Synod might also consider. First, the Code of Conduct should be extended to any form of public discourse, be it in national or local media, or in written articles or interviews. This should go without saying but, given the events of recent weeks and days, I fear this needs to be spelt out very clearly.

Secondly, I am concerned to see that there is no mechanism for sanctions against lay members who wilfully flout this voluntary code. I stress “lay” members as complaints against clergy can be taken up under the Clergy Discipline Measure. This to me is unfair as we should all be treated equally and be equally accountable.

I wonder, therefore, if we might adopt a similar mechanism to that proposed in the new policy on fringe meetings and displays. Here members are asked to formally agree to adhere to the policy by email and it is clearly stated in paragraph 31 that, “The Business Committee reserves the right to refuse any further applications from organisations for up to two groups of sessions if it takes the view that the guidelines have been infringed”.

I would propose, therefore, that Synod members be asked to voluntarily show their assent to the new Code of Conduct by emailing their agreement to the Clerk to the Synod. Should this then be deemed by the Business Committee to be to be infringed, I propose that we, Synod, empower them to adopt the same sanctions as those in the fringe and display policy.

Chair, it is a great privilege to serve on Synod and one I believe that comes with significant responsibility. However, where there is responsibility there should always be accountability and where this is missing I believe we owe it to the good of all to ensure that we voluntarily establish it. Thank you.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester): Point of order. Some of that which was referenced in Jayne Ozanne's speech about the attacks that have been made may well pertain to some of the communications that I have sent out in recent days. This is to say that it was not I nor Christian Concern who put any of the information concerning Ms Ozanne into the public domain. It is her Facebook page that is public, it is deliberate, and for several weeks she has promoted her relationship with her ---

The Chair: Could I call you to order on this.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester): It is a point of order in terms of response to a veiled attack ---

The Chair: There is no right of response. The previous speaker made no comment to any person or organisation in the speech that she gave and therefore this is not a point of order with regard to anything that has been said.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): I think it is absolutely wonderful that we are meeting tomorrow to discuss evangelism, and I am really pleased that the workshops are on the Agenda, but I noticed very little in the press complaining about the lack of evangelism from the Church of England. What I have noticed in the press are two abiding issues. I just wonder whether or not we need to have workshops that help us to address those abiding issues. I noticed that the Archbishops' Council had at some stage in the last year had some training on unconscious bias. I just wonder whether or not it would be worth our while having some unconscious bias training for all members of Synod. Thank you.

Mr Keith Cawdron (Liverpool): I rise to question a decision of the Business Committee. I suspect that I am not alone when the Synod papers arrive in putting to the bottom for reading those which are not expected to be debated, I anticipate that they will cover minor and technical matters. So I was surprised when I eventually reached GS 2064, the (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure, to find clause 1 giving a new power to the Church Commissioners to provide funds for the Archbishops' Council. It seems to me that this is a permanent and significant change which will affect the work of the Church

Commissioners far into the indefinite future, and changing the powers of a body such as the Church Commissioners is, I suggest, no small thing.

I really do not feel that the deemed procedure, whereby this is only debated if 25 members indicate they wish to do so, is appropriate for this kind of change. I think it is really quite important that something like this should be presented and justified to the Synod. I can find no reference to this proposed change in either the Annual Reports of the Archbishops' Council or the Commissioners. I, for one, am open to being persuaded that this change is necessary, but I do feel extremely strongly that this is not what the deemed procedure is for. This is an item of substance which should be debated at Synod through the full legislative procedure.

I would like to invite the Chair of the Business Committee to explain the decision taken on this matter because I genuinely believe that the Committee has made a wrong call in this respect. I suspect one thing she may point out is that the deadline for those indicating they wish this Measure to be debated is, I think I am right, 5.30 this afternoon, so I would like gently to encourage other Synod members who may feel that this is something we should be debating to sign up and indicate their wish to do so. Thank you very much.

Mrs Lorna Ashworth (Chichester): The Agenda before Synod would seem rather unremarkable if not for the obvious sexuality and gender debates. The usual business of legislation, finance and some outward-looking discussion on the cost of citizenship is on offer. As a Synod, we rightly speak also about our mission in ministry, making references to God and His Kingdom of freedom and justice, et cetera, but, ultimately, when I look at this Agenda I see it as fundamentally flawed. There is no set framework in practice which allows for a correct interpretation of the words that we use.

Let me explain. In GS 1161 we have a Report entitled *A Confident Church in a Pluralistic Europe* and in GS 2063, when we address mission and ministry in a multi-faith society, we read in paragraph 23, of a vision for churches "to become confident in sharing the Gospel". In reality what I see is the opposite. These discussions and debates that we have must be sourced from a clear and faithful understanding of what the Gospel actually is.

As the established Church in this nation, we have a responsibility to proclaim clearly the message of Christ: unashamed, unafraid; come hell or high water.

However, as a corporate body I believe we have become unable to articulate the saving message of Jesus Christ which fully encompasses the reality of sin, repentance and forgiveness, and without this message we do not teach a true Gospel and people do not get saved.

We can sit here and legislate all we want and talk about mission until the cows come home, but until we are clear about which Gospel we proclaim and until we have a House

of Bishops full of shepherds who stand for the truth, found only in Scripture through Jesus Christ, our work here can only offer confusion and plurality to a lost and dying world.

However, my heart does rejoice and it rejoices to the point of overflowing with hope; hope that the power of the one true living God can still rescue this establishment and the missed opportunities; secondly, that should this establishment continue to fail in its responsibility there is another way. GAFCON has had the foresight, with ACNA, to consecrate a man whom I have grown to deeply respect and admire as a missionary Bishop to Europe and to Scotland and the Alliance. Could I suggest that he would have been a more appropriate ecumenical guest. Praise be to God.

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln): I am particularly interested in the work of the Lay Ministries Working Group and its recently published *Serving Together* Report. I wonder why time has not been found on the agenda to consider this important Report which is now the subject of consultation in the dioceses. Would it not be helpful for Synod to be given an early opportunity to assure itself of the directional consistency of this important work with the equally important and more foundational Report *Setting God's People Free* rather than having to wait until July 2018, as is indicated in the Renewal and Reform *Resourcing Ministerial Education* Paper GS Misc 1170. Thank you.

Canon Peter Adams (St Albans): Synod, I welcome this Report. However, I want to suggest there is an imbalance that we can and we should seek to rectify. By the conclusion of these York sessions the past three gatherings of Synod will have spent approximately three and a half days talking about issues related to sexuality. In comparison, we will have spent 45 minutes talking about our relationship with people of other faiths. While I welcome deeply the opportunity to address the issues of conversion therapy and welcoming transgender people and the announcement of a way forward on a wider debate on sexuality, our nation is deeply challenged by many more issues than these. A strong voice on all of these is needed now more than ever. The Presence and Engagement debate is much more than affirming another five years of this vital programme. It will enable much needed good news stories about relations between Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and more to be told and, perhaps more importantly, to be amplified by their telling in this place. It will enable principles of good practice of community engagement to be highlighted; principles we all need as we live in this diverse society. It will highlight good practice in sharing the incredible Good News of Jesus Christ that we are stewards of. Through an amendment I am introducing, our debate will remind the whole Church in our nation of our important role in challenging hatred and division and it will challenge the strong narrative out there that Christians and Muslims can only ever be enemies. All this in 45 minutes.

After four terror attacks this spring and summer, and with the official line that the next one is not if but when, as a Church we need to be more engaged in this work than ever and through it to give a lead to our nation. Synod, I ask that we give this debate the priority it needs at this time.

Revd Canon Debbie Flach (Europe): Thank you, Business Committee, for aligning the evening sessions along Westminster lines. It is a great pleasure that we are not required to engage our brains until 10 o'clock at night. However, may I refer you to paragraph 9 of the Business Committee Report GS 2060 and the excellent idea for Synod members to spend more time together? It is an excellent idea, except when you put members of the diocese in different dining rooms. Europe would really quite like to meet together over an elongated lunch or dinner, but you have, once again, prevented us from doing so. In the light of wishing to work together, could you please make some arrangements so that we have the option, if we should so wish, to dine together. Thank you.

Revd Tiffer Robinson (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I am very grateful that the motion standing in my name about school admissions has been tabled for this Synod and, God willing, it will be discussed, but I am concerned about how it has been referred to in the Business Committee Report. It refers to it as "calling on the Government to give priority to the children of clergy for entry to local schools". I realise summarising motions must be a challenge but this really is incredibly misleading. My motion is about addressing a structural disadvantage and explicitly not asking for priority to be given. It is not just for clergy but all in tied accommodation. Please can I ask kindly that more care is taken summarising motions in the future? Thank you.

Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford): Synod, I am motivated to ask that we do not follow the suggestion for a Code of Conduct. We are Christians and we are called to speak the truth in love. We must be free, within civil boundaries, to say what we think. I plead with Synod and the Chair of the Business Committee that when you plan these things - I did write to the Chair and say this was so important a subject that we are discussing, surely a Private Member's Motion is not the way to open it up, it lays us open to bad feeling and bad temper. I would just urge you to remember that the Apostles did not hold back when they were talking about the Gospel. They could be very straight, but they spoke the truth in love, so do not muzzle us. Freedom of speech is terribly important and saying it in love is too. Thank you.

The Chair: After the next speaker I would be looking for a motion for closure of this item.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): I appreciate what has been said about the Code of Conduct and I note that when two speakers have been speaking in this debate there were noises of unhappiness and booing. I do believe that part of the way that we are supposed to treat each other is to listen in silence and to applaud if we wish to afterwards. I would suggest that we would all be feeling better about each other if we observed that way of behaving. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 3.

The Chair: That has my permission. I therefore put the motion for closure on Item 3 to

Synod.

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

The Chair: I now call upon the Chair of the Business Committee to respond to the debate. She has three minutes.

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): Thank you, my friend, I do enjoy a joke and I will do my best. I want to thank everyone who has spoken in this debate. A lot of the contents were not a great surprise to me because many of you were kind enough to email and tell me what you were going to ask me. I hope that I will be able to satisfy you with these answers.

It is clear that the Code of Conduct, which is currently a matter for consultation, concerns many of you. I think that it will be extremely difficult to extend a Code of Conduct, which is for this Synod, to cover things which happen beyond this Synod. All I can say to those of you who have more radical suggestions is that you must write about them so that we can consider them in a more gentle way than perhaps by responding to the debate on the Business Committee Report.

I realise that expressing concern in a debate such as this means that all members will have heard one another's concerns and each of you can take action. We have heard both Mary Durlacher and Sally Gaze speak on that subject, and rather wisely. I would want to say to you that whilst the Business Committee can look at a Code of Conduct, and wants to do that, each one of you has a responsibility to the other, and that covers our personal behaviour in areas of disagreement.

I promised some of you that this might be a bit head mistressy and this is the head mistressy bit. We have a real responsibility not only to take care of one another but to hold our friends, as well as those with whom we disagree, to account when we do disagree. I believe that that is part of what good disagreement is about.

I do need to respond to one point of Ms Ozanne's which is that members are elected here so we really cannot legislate to remove elected members from an elected body.

I want to move to the question of deemed business. I am advised that Mission and Pastoral Measures are always treated under the deemed procedure and we were advised that this was possible and we considered it appropriate. This seemed like a matter which was not policy but I do understand the concerns expressed. I would like to make clear that this does not give the Commissioners extensive powers. In some ways, this is one of the things that we are trying to work out together because what it does do is give the Commissioners a distinctly limited opportunity to help Archbishops' Council with money that cannot be spent under present powers, so it is really a way of trying to work our way through something without going into extensive legislation.

You have the opportunity to write to the Revision Committee about your concerns and I would warmly advise those of you who have concerns to do that. There is a mechanism for making sure that something that has been deemed has been debated, and if you choose to go in that direction we will, of course, do our job and make time for you, but there are a large number of amendments to business certainly this afternoon and further on in the agenda and that will be difficult.

I think I can only say now thank you to everyone who has spoken. I have made extensive notes on the suggestions that you have made and if any of you would like to have a more detailed answer, I would be happy to give you the answer which I had prepared to say in my time, which has run out. I beg your pardon, Madam Chair.

The Chair: I now put Item 3 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report’

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That completes this item of business. I now call the Chair of the Business Committee, who wishes to propose two variations of business.

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): Thank you, Chair. You will know that the Presidents have directed the addition of an item of business to the agenda, which is Item 46 on the Order Paper for today. In order to make room for this, the Report of the Archbishops’ Council’s Audit Committee will be taken as deemed business. Additionally, as predicted in the Fourth Notice Paper, we propose that the rubric before Questions is changed from “not later than 5.30 pm” to “not later than 6.00 pm”. If you agree to this it will give us an extra half hour for business this afternoon, and I can assure you that if you glance at the Order Paper you will see the need for that, before we begin Questions.

We also want to propose a second variation and that is to move the brief item of legislative business, those are Items 506 and 511 in the Order Paper, so that they are taken immediately before Item 46; in other words pretty much now. This is because we need to have completed the Final Drafting stages for draft Amending Canons No. 36 and No. 37 this afternoon if we are able to move through the Article 7 procedure over the course of the next few days, with a view to taking Final Approval on Monday. If we do not complete Final Drafting today, then Final Approval will be delayed until next February. This is a practical variation that I am bringing to you and I would like, therefore, to invite the Chair to put both these proposed variations to the Synod for its general consent.

The Chair: Synod, you have heard the proposals from the Chair of the Business Committee, which I accordingly now put to you. First, the proposal that the rubric before Questions is changed from “not later than 5.30 pm” to “not later than 6.00 pm”. Does that have the Synod’s consent?

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

The Chair: That proposal has the Synod’s general consent and the rubric will now be changed accordingly.

I now put the second proposal that Items 506 and 511 are taken immediately before Item 46. Does that have the Synod’s consent?

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

The Chair: That proposal has the Synod’s general consent and we accordingly now move to Item 506. Thank you, Synod.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman)* took the Chair at 3.35 pm

ITEM 506

DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 36 (GS 2029B)

DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 37 (GS 2029BB)

The Chair: Members of Synod, we now come to take the Final Drafting stage for Amending Canons No. 36 and No. 37. You will need the draft Amending Canons themselves, GS 2029B and GS 2029BB, and the Report of the Steering Committee, GS 2029Z. I now call upon the Bishop of St Albans to move Item 506, “That the Synod do take note of this Report”. Bishop, you have up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I beg to move

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

Good afternoon. At this stage I am not going to say much about the substance of Amending Canons No. 36 and No. 37. I will describe what the two Canons do and how they came about at the Final Approval stage which is expected to be taken on Monday. For now, I shall briefly say something about the Report of the Steering Committee on the Final Drafting of the two Canons.

The first thing to say is that the Steering Committee did not identify the need for any drafting amendments to either Canon. The Report does not therefore propose any. The Committee does, however, propose a special amendment to Amending Canon No. 36

which provides for prescribed forms of vesture to be dispensed with in certain circumstances. The proposed special amendment is concerned with the form of vesture worn at a service of baptism which takes place during public worship.

When the Revision Committee considered the draft Canon, it agreed that where a baptism took place during a regular Sunday service, the minister should not have to obtain the agreement of the persons concerned, that is the candidate or the candidate's parents or Godparents, before dispensing with the wearing of vesture. The normal practice of the parish regarding vesture should prevail. The Revision Committee, therefore, made an amendment to the draft Canons so that the agreement of the persons concerned would be required only "at a service of baptism that is not held at public worship on a Sunday".

Since the point was considered by the Revision Committee, it has been pointed out to the Steering Committee that this fails to deal with a case where a baptism takes place during public worship on a day other than Sunday. For example, if a baptism took place during a regular weekday service in a parish where the prescribed forms of vesture were not normally worn, the minister would nevertheless have to obtain the agreement of the persons concerned to dispense with the wearing of a surplice or alb with scarf or stole. This would seem to be contrary to what the Revision Committee was seeking to achieve when it amended the draft Canon, which was to ensure that the normal practice of the parish should prevail at public worship. If the Synod takes note of the Report I shall therefore be proposing a special amendment to address this precise point.

The only other issue raised with the Steering Committee concerned the use of gender-neutral terms in the Canons. We deal with this in paragraphs 10-14 of the Report and I do not think I need to add anything to what is said there. I would merely highlight, first, that the two amending Canons themselves do avoid using gender-specific terms and, secondly, that the issue of gender-neutral language is one that relates to the whole body of Canons, not just these two, and it was not therefore an issue that the Steering Committee, dealing as we were with amendments to just two of the Canons, thought was within our remit to resolve.

With those introductory comments, I am glad to commend this to Synod.

The Chair: Item 506 is now open for debate. I call the Bishop of Guildford.

The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Andrew Watson): Thank you, Madam Chair, for calling me. The subject of clergy vesture may seem rather unimportant given some more significant subjects we are looking at today, tomorrow and during the course of this session. What we clergy wear might not be thought of as of earth-shattering significance and nor will GS 2029 singlehandedly bring in the Kingdom of God, but as Amending Canon No. 36 makes its way through Final Drafting and, I hope, Final Approval over the course of this group of sessions, I would like to make one brief observation concerning the proposed special amendment and the thrust of the Amending Canon as a whole,

which may just remind us as to why we are doing what we are doing and perhaps quell a few fears along the way.

There is a consistency, of course, in demanding a particular dress code or uniform when it comes to any role or office, and such consistency is both simple and clear-cut when it comes to the officeholder themselves and those whom they serve. Not having to ask the question, "What shall I wear?" is, from my perspective, something of a relief and a similar relief, in some quarters at least, when the Bishop turns up and looks something like a Bishop. But in 1 Corinthians 9, Paul speaks of a new kind of consistency based not on a single practice, say on wearing the same clothes, but on a single missional perspective. All too often his teaching here has been only partially quoted so that "being all things to all people" is frequently held up as a rather disreputable position, memorably exemplified in Groucho Marx's famous quip, "Those are my principles and if you don't like them, well, I've always got some more".

Of course, that is not what Paul is saying here at all. Just as the principle of hospitality means that we do not serve up a bird in a bird in a bird when our vegetarian neighbours come to dinner, just as the principle of respect means that we do not stride into the mosque without first removing our shoes, so the principle of mission means not simply becoming all things to all people but, rather, becoming all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.

The message of the Cross is offensive enough already was Paul's perspective here, so that removing any unnecessary grounds for offence is an essential part of the task of evangelism. This is not in itself an argument for beating our chasubles into chinos. There are many times when it is precisely the wearing of robes that adds gravitas to an occasion, that helps worshippers to meet with the Living God and that enables the Gospel to get a fair hearing. This Amending Canon is, at its heart, replacing one consistency with another, and I would argue that the new consistency is better rooted in Gospel theology and missional intent than its predecessor. Thank you very much.

The Chair: I see no one standing so I call upon the Bishop of St Albans to reply. You have up to five minutes.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I agree.

The Chair: I now put Item 506 to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

ITEM 511

The Chair: The motion is quite clearly carried. I now call upon the Bishop of St Albans to move the special amendment in respect of draft Amending Canon No. 36, Item 511 on the Order Paper.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I beg to move the Special Amendment

‘In paragraph 1(6)(a), *leave out* “on a Sunday”.’

Chair, members of Synod, I can be very, very brief on this. I explained the background to this amendment when speaking to the Report. Its effect would be that whenever a baptism took place during public worship, whether on a Sunday or on a weekday, the agreement of the persons concerned would not be required for the minister to dispense with the wearing of vesture where that was the normal practice in the parish. I am therefore pleased to commend this amendment.

The Chair: Item 511 is now open to debate. I see no one standing so I now put Item 511 to the vote.

The Special Amendment

‘In paragraph 1(6)(a), *leave out* “on a Sunday”’.

was put and carried on a show of hands

The Chair: That too is quite clearly carried. Draft Amending Canons No. 36 and No. 37, being Article 7 business, now stand committed to the House of Bishops. This now closes that item of business.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 3.47 pm

ITEM 46

AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION, A STILL SMALL VOICE OF CALM

The Chair: We come now to Item 46, an additional agenda item introduced by the Presidents, “After the General Election, a Still Small Voice of Calm”. Let me say at this stage that I very much hope that this debate will be characterised by such a still small voice of calm.

The revised text for this item can be found on the First Order Paper together with the text of amendments from Mr Lamming, Mrs Minichiello-Williams, Canon Alderton-Ford and Mr Scowen. Members will have seen that we have a considerable amount of business to get

through in respect of this item. I know I can rely on your self-restraint and continence. That was not meant to be a joke! I now call upon his Grace, the Archbishop of York, to move Item 46 standing in his name. He has up to 15 minutes.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): I beg to move

‘That this Synod, mindful that the recent General Election has left many questions unanswered about the shape and priorities of our government at a critical time in the nation’s history:

- a) give thanks, nonetheless, for the increased turnout and call upon all parties to build on this by addressing the causes of voter apathy and non-participation;
- b) pray for all those elected to Parliament that they will prioritise the common good of all people in everything they do, especially in negotiations between parties to secure support for a legislative programme;
- c) pray for courage, for our political leaders as they face the constraints and opportunities of uncertainty and weakness, and for the people of the nation as they too face unprecedented questions about the future;
- d) call upon Christians everywhere to maintain pressure on politicians of all parties to put the heart of their programmes;
- e) commend the continuing work of the churches serving the poor and vulnerable, at home and worldwide, as an example of the priorities which we hope to see in the programmes of government; and
- f) commit the Church of England to maintaining strong and generous international relations, through our dioceses, the Anglican Communion and ecumenical links, as relationships within the United Kingdom, across Europe and worldwide face new tensions and challenges.’

On 20 January 2015, I launched this book, *On Rock or Sand? Firm Foundations for Britain’s Future*. Immediately, the book received two reactions: those who hated it and those who read it. It is true you know.

Two and a half years on, with a Referendum and an unexpected General Election behind us, the world may have moved on, but the questions still remain the same.

It is impossible to consider the kinds of policies which should shape our future as a nation without first focusing on moral principles and virtues - and indeed the vision for our society - which undergird them. Recent political storms, and the tragic events of recent weeks, have caused many to pause and reflect. The Archbishop of Canterbury and I asked that

as a Synod we spend this next hour reflecting upon those things today. The Christian vision is of a world in which we are created for fellowship and mutual responsibility rather than individualism and consumerism; a world in which the principal aim of policy is to enhance the wellbeing (that is, the personal and communal flourishing) of all in society.

As we now seek to reassess our relationships, in our local communities, in Europe, and internationally, our goal must always be the common good of all.

At the outset, and with the presence of our beloved brothers from Finland and Germany in mind, I would add that this must also involve a fresh commitment to building relations between European and British churches - at central and local level - to lean against the tendency to pull apart, which will get worse as negotiations go forward towards leaving the European Union, almost echoing the Bishop from Tampere.

We need to go on asking, what does wellbeing and flourishing look like in our communities? After all, economy, from the Greek word *oikonomia*, is about an *oikos* - a household, a community held together by a set of relationships; relationships that matter more than wealth itself. Britain is both a community in and of itself, and part of a world community, and in the face of our present national and international political upheavals, we must stop and consider carefully and prayerfully what this actually means.

The financial collapse in 2008 taught us that we had become obsessed with money. People were borrowing money that they did not have to buy things they did not need, to achieve a happiness that would not last. We must learn from our present political and economic challenges to think less about the price of things and more about the value of things.

There will be many lessons to learn from the fire in Grenfell Tower, but we are already aware that false economies can lead to human tragedy.

The promotion of wellbeing must surely be about developing systems and policies which provide for people according to their need, in order to release their talents in turn for the common profit of us all: building their skills and confidence, paying them a living wage in order to enable them to live a full life, and to understand and exercise their responsibility towards themselves and others. That is why I believe that we should stop talking about welfare benefits and talk instead about social insurance, a term which underlines both that our focus should be on need and that we are all in this together.

What we must hope for today is a vision of a wellbeing, not a welfare society. This would be founded on principles of freedom, fellowship, service of God and neighbour and on the rule of law. These principles are the rock, the firm foundations on which we can build a just, sustainable and compassionate society in which all can participate and flourish. Anything else is, I fear, sand.

Let me apply this body of principle to the areas of taxation and social care in our common life together in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Social care. As for social care, we are in quite a muddle. The Conservative Party manifesto proposed to allow anyone to keep the last £100k of their accumulated wealth after paying for social care, but this was quickly dubbed a 'dementia tax', because it was seen as unfair.

If we had two neighbours, one of whom had cancer requiring expensive and longstanding care, and another who had dementia requiring expensive and longstanding care, the person with cancer would be paid for by the community, through the National Health Service, and the person with dementia would have to pay for care themselves, hence the unfairness. This indeed reversed the previous policy (following the Andrew Dilnot Report in 2011) of a cap on people's liabilities. Indeed, this had been legislated for in the Care Act in 2015 and was then deferred, just after the 2015 election, from 2016 implementation to 2020 implementation, hence being in a real muddle.

Older people may legitimately be asked to pay at least some of the tax to fund their care, but surely this is an area where we are better off working together and taking risks jointly? That is what was meant by a cap in the Dilnot Report, that what you do in the National Health Service should be exactly similar to what you do to older people, so a consultation in the autumn of this year would be most welcome.

Applying my principles to tax, the level of public sector borrowing has declined as public spending has been constrained and tax has actually seen some increase as the economy has grown. The outstanding debt is still relatively high by historic standards, although not so alarmingly. See, for example, figure 3 in the release from the Office for National Statistics dated May 2017. The red line that you see shows that public sector borrowing has come down significantly as a percentage of GDP. Levels of borrowing are not what they have been.

You see, the main challenge on tax and public spending is that we do not really have enough tax to pay for all the things we want to do together. This week's debate on public sector pay has demonstrated that there is little sign of a coherent plan about how to fund the health service, education, social care, defence, housing, or transport infrastructure. Proposed solutions from either group pit one section of society against another to provide the funds, either by cutting public spending for some or increasing taxes for others. Surely the nature of communal action is that it is precisely action taken together.

The language of "tax", of course, implies that what we have is "ours" and the state "takes" from what is ours through taxation. Tax becomes a concession from a position that makes "private property" an absolute, to be compromised only as far as absolutely necessary. The debate about the "requisitioning" of unoccupied flats in Kensington for the victims of

the Grenfell Tower fire shows how difficult it has become to make a case for the public good, even in extreme cases transcending our normal rules about private property.

What can we bring - we, as the Body of Christ - to this debate? We have a very strong Christian story about how communities can work together, going right back to Old Testament narratives around sharing of land, redemption of debts, all bound together by the Golden Rule: "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets".

While Torah provisions about jubilee and not gleaning the last grape, or harvesting the edge of the field may not find a modern application, those laws actually witness to a notion contrary to giving absolute status to private property: the land and its produce come from God and are for the people as a whole, not just sections of it. Equally, while it may be that the practice of the earliest Christians of "having and holding all things in common" would be impossible to apply to a developed society, that practice also witnesses to the primacy of the common good.

I am therefore suggesting that the taxation system not only funds important public goods - our defence, our security, our flourishing through education, our care for the sick and vulnerable - but also "puts money in its place", interrupting money's constant tendency to dominate our priorities. Our taxation system should make clear that while private property may be an efficient way of ensuring that our resources are stewarded and cared for, it is in no way an absolute. We do not "own" our money; we "care for" our money as part of the whole human resource for our nourishing.

In this regard, Synod, may I draw your attention to the Christian Aid tax justice campaign. It is worth reading what they suggest in this area.

Members of Synod, to serve the common good, how many of us would be prepared to top up freely our income tax from our net monthly take-home pay, for education, for health, and for social care? I ask that question again. In order to serve the common good, how many of us would be prepared to top up freely our income tax from our net monthly take-home pay, doing this for education, for health and for social care?

You have heard the question and I am going to put a question to you. Please may we have a show of hands of people who are willing, not simply through taxation but what I earn and get at home, to put a fiver or ten or two pounds, provided it goes to health and education as well as social care? How many would do that? Friends, we are among the 48% who, according to the British Social Attitudes survey, wanted higher taxes to pay for more spending on those three areas of the common good.

In the Diocese of York we moved away from fairer shares or parish share to free will offers. We have been doing it for three years. Our income is improving, people are more

excited that they are freely of themselves willingly giving to the common fund. We have got a tradition which we can tell everybody.

Friends, with such an overwhelming show of hands I am emboldened to move the main motion and I hope the Chair will consent to this. The words will appear at some stage. We need to do a new thing, friends.

What our society needs in order to gain faith in politics and politicians, to sustain hope for justice and to fashion policies which deliver the common good is to develop a new values-based politics reflecting four core principles: first, recognition of the equal values of all in society; two, commitment to offer everyone the opportunity to flourish; three, appreciation of our essential human inter-relatedness; four, acceptance of our responsibility towards ourselves as well as towards others.

Faith, Hope and Charity, these are the three anchors which hold fast the ship of the mind amidst the dangers of the waves and, I may add, the ship of the state as well. After the General Election, this is a still small voice of calm.

I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

The Chair: Thank you, your Grace. Members of Synod will wish to be aware that copies of the Archbishop's speech will be available from the main desk immediately after this item of business. Could I also indicate that his Grace had very kindly given me notice of the possible amendment and I have given my consent to that being moved in due course. I am hoping now that we will have a short time of debate on the main motion as proposed and that we will then move to take each of the amendments in turn before finally returning to a debate on the motion as it may or may not have been amended. So Item 46 is now open for debate. I call Dame Caroline Spelman, followed by Miss Debbie Buggs.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Rt Hon Mrs Caroline Spelman (ex officio): Thank you, Chair. I hope I shall fall within the time. Members of Synod, I was heartened to see that the motion from the Archbishop of York asked the Church to continue to pray for politicians. I know many of you already do and I want to say a heartfelt thank you on behalf of my colleagues. It is a difficult time to be an elected representative, whatever your politics are, in an era of global instability, and your prayers are very much appreciated.

Turning to the motion, any governing party will strive to achieve what is good and right for the people in its care. Whatever the outcome of an election, the majority party must draw up a programme for the business to deliver it. The Government has put forward much, I hope, that the Church will be able to welcome, including legislation to improve tenants' rights, combat domestic violence, ensure patient safety and tackle mental health. Firm commitments have also been made to things that I know the Church cherishes, such as

the Paris Agreement on climate change and international aid. The key priority has to be establishing the new relationship with the EU whilst also maintaining our other important alliances, such as on security and defence. I will work very closely with the Bishop in Europe and the Bishop of Leeds to impress upon my ministerial colleagues the concerns of the Church and its congregations who remain within the EU.

Recent tragedies have shown the need for all of us, as people, communities and institutions, to focus more on the things that unite us rather than what divides us, as the late Jo Cox MP said, and I was really alarmed during the election to see quite how widespread is public distrust of official information, simple facts and our institutions. Facts seem to count less than a good story these days and the press are only too delighted to write something like “Church at war with State” or “with itself”. I think we have to be really careful not to play into this narrative.

As the Second Church Estates Commissioner, I account to Parliament for the work of the Church Commissioners, the decisions taken in this Synod and the activity of the Church at all levels. I have monthly questions in the House of Commons which cover everything from parish matters to international religious freedom. My candid advice to Synod is that we please consider carefully how our debates are heard, both in the wider Church and the country. If we, as the Church, are to move forward as one body and build the Kingdom then we need to speak about how our politics and our institutions can work together for the common good, and also lead by example, demonstrating that we understand how to disagree well.

At this turbulent time we must be that still small voice of calm, but I believe you need to go further. I hope that you will take away from this Synod the need for the Church to be brave, to once more look outside itself at our communities and take a lead in promoting that calm. We need to encourage every parish to play a proactive part in public life - many do - helping to heal the intergenerational inequality and support fellow faith communities to challenge extremism and tackle historical and national divisions that we all know we have.

In recent years the electoral cycle has dominated much of the parliamentary and political calendar and this can make it really difficult to tackle difficult topics and they often end up in the long grass. The Archbishop of Canterbury has recently called for a cross-party approach to the terms of Brexit, and I think the Church can also play a key role in other areas where political constraints have often thwarted progress, such as the future of social care, underachievement in our schools, the future of social housing and deprivation. This may all sound daunting, but if we are compassionate, consistent and outward-looking, matching our words with practical action, confident in the gifts it will bring the nation, there is no reason why our voice should not be heeded. Thank you.

The Chair: After Miss Buggs, for a maiden speech Professor Martin Gainsborough.

Miss Debbie Buggs (London): The events of the last few weeks have reminded us how important good leadership is. Without it, we are defenceless, insecure and vulnerable. Those of us, like me, who live, work and worship in London have been particularly reminded of this.

In the Old Testament we see a nation prosperous, at peace and internationally respected under the reign of King Solomon. It is right that we find ourselves attracted to that and longing for such a kingdom ourselves. Even though we do not live in a theocracy today, we need a ruler who, like King Solomon, humbly recognises that he or she cannot rule rightly without the help of God and who therefore earnestly prays to God for wisdom.

Reading further on in the Bible, in the Gospels we see the wisdom of Jesus displayed as he visits a temple aged 12 and impresses the religious teachers with his understanding. In the Sermon on the Mount we find unparalleled wisdom that is universally respected still today. In His wisdom, Jesus chooses to die on the Cross to rescue His people from their sins and to bring them eternal life. We long for the time when Christ's Kingdom of Righteousness, Peace and Prosperity will be fully realised at his Second Coming. In the meantime, though, we pray, as instructed by the Apostle Paul, who urged that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone, for kings and all those in authority, that we might lead peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.

Whatever our views on whether Brexit should be hard, soft or cancelled, we can pray for courage for whoever is in power, and I am pleased that the Archbishop has reminded us to do that today.

Revd Martin Gainsborough (Bristol): Thank you for calling me. I am a Professor of Politics, as well as a priest, so I like to think I know something about politics. I am sorry to say but I am rather underwhelmed by this motion and I want from the off to make a distinction between some of the speeches we have just heard. I see lots of connections in terms of the ideas that were being circulated in people's speeches, it is the motion that I have a problem with. It does not feel like a motion written by a Church set on fire by the Holy Spirit. Rather, for me, it smacks of a motion written by a fearful Church, fearful of saying anything substantive, of naming the issues, in case they upset someone. It is not a motion that makes me feel particularly proud to be a member of the Church of England.

So my first point is this: if we are going to speak, let us say something substantive, otherwise let us keep silent. I believe Ecclesiastes says something along these lines. Motions like this, I fear, just make us look a bit silly and anyway will just be ignored. Clause (c) of the motion is a case in point. It says, after going round the houses a bit, "We are going to pray for courage, for our political leaders". Well, sure, but actually what we have is a failure of leadership by our political class. Let us be a Church that names these things.

The Institute of Fiscal Studies got it absolutely right, I think, when it said during the election campaign that neither Labour nor Conservatives were being honest with the public about the spending implications of their manifestos. There are so many other areas where we are not having a grown-up, non-partisan debate about the real issues. What do we want to fund in respect of our health service and what do we not? What are the fiscal and ethical implications? What will life outside the European Union really be like and how will we know? The sheer scale of the global refugee crisis, which I suspect has not fully hit us yet, how do we understand its underlying causes? I do not think Government is going to tell us. The systematic, institutionalised maltreatment of the poor in our country, Grenfell Tower highlights this in a particularly acute way, but we can see it in the way that successive governments have approached welfare reform. That is not to make a party political point, but it is an issue that the Church should be drawing attention to. What kind of society do we want to live in? Let us tell people. We have a radical Gospel. The radical Gospel of Jesus Christ which we follow says lots of things on these issues - too many things for me to list in a short speech. But we need to speak out and to speak boldly and to tell it how it is. We are not an adjunct to government. We are the Church of God. We should not be afraid of calling the government of the day out, of speaking truth to power.

There is one more thing, and it is really important in our current climate: learning to disagree well. I think we had reference to it a moment ago. As a society, we are very bad at this at the moment and yet stable political communities depend on it. We need to do all that we can to encourage this, and I think the local church is particularly well-placed to do this, but if we are to speak with moral authority to the nation we need to model good disagreement in the Church, including at Synod, and I think we still have some work to do.

I find it hard to support this motion. I am not even sure the amendments actually tackle the issues. I would just like to leave a thought with Synod that we could perhaps decide that the motion be not put. Thank you.

The Chair: I am afraid that at this distance and in this light I had thought that the gentleman in the blue shirt was Mr Hutchinson. I know you are not because I have now spotted him over there. If you would come, Sir, you are next, followed by the Bishop of Southwark.

Dr Nick Land (York): Paul Hutchinson and I do come from adjacent parishes and we are often almost twins in so many ways! Paul, when he talks about government, says: "Pay everyone what you owe him. If taxes, taxes. If revenue, revenue. If respect, respect. If honour, honour". A few weeks ago, after our diocesan synod we were having lunch together in honour of Jo Cox, who in delivering her responsibilities was murdered. What I am aware of through friends in politics is that many MPs now are finding themselves having to leave their houses, often at very short notice, because of threats to their life. The people who are choosing to be our elected representatives are paying a high price

for doing that and I think we have got to take responsibility, all of us collectively, for do we create an environment and a society where truth can be spoken and where we can have an honest and truthful discussion about what is needed, or have we all contributed to a society where only bad news is interesting.

As many of you know, I work in the NHS. What I note in press story after press story is whenever something goes wrong in the NHS it is the whole NHS: "NHS has caused World War 3", "NHS once again has killed a million children in five minutes". If anything good happens in the NHS, it is only a tiny, bottom-line story. That, of course, creates a self-fulfilling prophecy of deteriorating services and negativity about what is still an extraordinarily good value and high quality service, although with increasing problems because of pressure and demand and funding and morale.

What Paul also tells us is: "Do not let any unwholesome stories come out of your mouth; only what is useful for building others up, that it might benefit those who listen". So my challenge to Synod is that all of us think about, "What are the good stories we can be telling? Actually, what are the good stories we can be telling of our local MPs and of Government and of the NHS and of education and of even this Synod?" Let us be people who tell good news and good stories in order to create an environment where we can actually have a clear and truthful and honest discussion of what we need to do as a society to deliver the kind of quality of society that we would all like to live in. Thank you.

The Chair: After the Bishop of Southwark I shall be looking for Mr Lamming to speak to and to move his amendment.

The Bishop of Southwark (Rt Revd Christopher Chessun): Mr Chairman, thank you for calling me. There is perhaps a happy consensus amongst biblical scholars that no one attributes to the still small voice of 1 Kings 19, a motion of 225 words.

As has been said, these are febrile times with our country facing unprecedented challenges. Our debate this afternoon is a good opportunity to ponder our response. We should resist the urge either to rehearse a litany of good works undertaken in our dioceses, important though those are, or to focus solely on the shortcomings of others or the political class at this present time. I have four brief observations.

First, the matter of leaving the European Union is a seismic one, not least because this country has spent more than 50 years orientating itself to join and then being enmeshed in membership. For the first time in centuries we shall no longer be at the heart of an international political entity. Rightly, we are no longer an Imperial power, but we have our Commonwealth role, sometimes undervalued but undoubtedly a very significant global network of goodwill and with much potential for future development.

My second point is that, electorally, we need to realise that the country is more sharply divided in matters of geography, age and education than by class. That, too, is new.

Third, a hung Parliament does not necessarily create a febrile environment; it merely helps reveal it. A party with a strong majority at the present time would arguably mask some of the difficult issues we currently face. This bringing into the light may be a good thing and certainly enhances the balance of power in favour of elected Members of Parliament.

Lastly, members of Synod will know that the Diocese of Southwark is a very diverse diocese, possibly one of the most so in the Church of England, covering an area of great economic and cultural vibrancy; also, that our cathedral was closed in the wake of the recent terror attacks - the ones at London Bridge. Some of the most pressing issues of our contemporary politics are thrown into sharp relief where our diversity is most evident. As with other dioceses, the Church has shown in each local context the ability to respond rapidly and has held the trust of the whole community. In Southwark this has been truly humbling. Our response has been wholehearted community and pastoral engagement, seeking to respond at points of need, be it immigration cases, food banks, the market traders of Borough Market, or expressing our solidarity with the disadvantaged and marginalised in partnership with other faith and community leaders, but my sense - lastly - is that there is a pressing need to articulate social and political theology that undergirds our Christian response to issues in good times and bad. The Archbishop of York's edited work which he has mentioned, *On Rock or Sand?*, and, similarly, Dr Malcolm Brown's ensemble piece, *Anglican Social Theology*, are signposts for us as we continue to play our part in the affairs of our nation, and this is the right time to reflect deeply and be confident and bold in our engagement. I support the motion as moved and even as amended by the Archbishop of York. Thank you.

Mr Ian Yemm (Bristol): Point of order. Canon Professor Martin Gainsborough made the suggestion that the motion might not be put. Before we get into the amendment processes, I just want to ask for some clarification about whether there is any provision to effect such a suggestion.

The Chair: There are a number of procedural motions which are available to members of Synod. You will understand that it is not for me to advise you as to when they may or may not be put. Canon Butler.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Under Standing Order 34(1) I would like to move the adjournment of this debate.

The Chair: Canon Butler has moved the procedural motion that the debate be now adjourned under Standing Order 34. Canon Butler has not more than two minutes to give his reasons. I will then ask the Archbishop of York, as mover of the main motion, to speak for not more than two minutes. When I have heard those two speakers, I will decide in my discretion under Standing Order 34 whether to allow any more speakers on the procedural motion.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I just want to pick up Canon Professor Gainsborough's point really. I, like many others, have watched and listened to the conversation that has been going on around this motion in the last few days. If I had a pound for every time I heard the words "motherhood and apple pie" I would be a rich man. That is not to say that the matters that the Archbishop brings to our attention are not important, and his mysterious amendment may have to wait for another day if this is passed, but it seems to me, given the amount of interest and response to Professor Gainsborough's point, this would be the right moment to test that in the mind of the Synod. If the mind of the Synod is that we should continue the debate I would be very happy, but I do think his point is worth attending to and giving us a chance to express our view upon it.

The Chair: The Archbishop of York to reply. You have two minutes, your Grace.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Chair, we deal with specifics when we have done the study and the work that is necessary, and then deal with them, but also there are times when we need to deal with general principles. What is at stake here are the principles which our nation should be guided by - and I recognise that in the things I have said and even in the motion itself - and in the letter the Archbishop of Canterbury and I wrote to the parishes we were trying to set out principles. I do not think when you are dealing with general principles which try to set a vision that you then say because there are no more specifics within it.

I would want to resist this adjournment and go on with it and then see what happens with the amendments, what happens with the main motion. I have never been at peace in my own soul when people bring such procedural motions. I always feel uncomfortable. So I would say keep going, and then of course the clock will run out because this is a very timed business.

The Chair: I propose to take a couple of speeches if there is anybody who wishes to contribute. Bishop of Willesden.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): I think we have got ourselves in a bit of a mess, as we often do, on quite how we should be responding to the political questions before us.

The history of the sorts of interventions we have made has ranged from the very detailed proposals that were made before the election before last, if you can remember that one - we have had so many recently - where we were criticised by Government and by others for being too prescriptive and too detailed in policy formulation, and this motion which people characterise as motherhood and apple pie but which actually does try to set out some principles, as the Archbishop has said, which we need to try to interject into the public debate.

Part of our problem is that we get muddled as to what we are meant to be doing. Here, I think, is an opportunity for us as a Synod to say, "Actually, politics is not in a good place at the moment". There is no sense that we know where we are going as a country and our contribution, as well as praying, does need to be engaged in the debate and the generality about what shapes our politics and how we should be engaged with that.

I think the motion that we have before us helps us with that. I do not think the amendments are particularly worthwhile, and I would actually want to vote against all of them, because they do then move us into prescriptive policy. What we should be saying is, "We have a debate that is going on here about how our country should be shaped. We need to get involved in it. Here is a Church offering and we need to go with it". It may not say all you want it to, but it gets us on the floor of public debate and it enables those who speak for us in the Lords and elsewhere to be able to say something useful in terms of shaping how we go forward as a country.

Mr Martin Kingston (Gloucester): I am tempted to ask, if Canon Butler will forgive me, what do we think we are doing when we would allow to be reported that the Church of England adjourns a debate which attempts to contribute to a vision for our nation? What will the headline look like when it says, "Church of England adjourns a debate motivated by someone who has the courage to stand up and say this is what our Church's vision is for our nation", and we want to adjourn it?

In circumstances where we have the opportunity, well-led, passionately led and, if I may so, with slightly less passion today, Archbishop, than usual, but passionately led from the heart to say, "This is what we believe". We care for the dispossessed. We care for the disadvantaged. We care for principles that will show that we wish to live out the Gospel. Members of Synod, we should not adjourn such a matter. We should passionately rise up and say, if I may say so to David, get rid of the slightly prickly and irrelevant amendments and focus on what matters.

What matters is that we should be heard as to what we believe and why we believe it. We believe it because it is for the good of our nation and, very obviously, for those who are disadvantaged in it. Members of Synod, do not adjourn our care for the nation. Stand up and support it. Rise up to support this man who stands for us and let the nation hear that we care. Thank you.

The Chair: Does any member wish to speak in support of the procedural motion?

Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford): In a sort of unplanned way, and perhaps against where the mood is swinging, I still would like to support Canon Butler's move to adjournment because of really what this debate looks like. I confess I am amongst those who have used the expression about "motherhood and apple pie" and suggested that this would be a debate about the merits of custard and cream.

It seems, however, that what we are being given, sadly and against his Grace's intentions, is a debate that will be about, variously, proportional representation, Scottish Referendums, marriage and the family. We have an hour and a half of that ahead of us. I fear that the headlines coming out of this hour and a half might be much worse than anything than might come out of the main motion. For that reason I support Canon Butler.

The Chair: I am now going to put the procedural motion that the debate be now adjourned to the vote. The effect of passing the motion will be that the debate, which is interrupted, may be resumed only by direction of the Business Committee. I now put to the Synod the motion that the debate be now adjourned.

The motion

'That the debate be now adjourned.'

was put and lost on a show of hands.

ITEM 47

The Chair: We now return to our debate and Mr Lamming, who is to speak to and move his amendment at Item 47. Mr Lamming, you have up to five minutes.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I beg to move as an amendment

'At the end of paragraph (a), insert--

“, in particular, by:

- (i) taking steps to change the current outdated and unfair voting system by introducing proportional representation by single transferable vote at Parliamentary elections (as used in this Synod); and*
- (ii) lowering the voting age to 16”*

Mr Chairman, members of Synod, I think I must start by giving a vote of thanks to you all for rejecting the last procedural motion. You may legitimately ask why I am proposing this particular amendment. The main motion, as it stands, is perhaps fairly bland. It has been described already by a previous speaker as “apple pie”, and who objects to apple pies?

A letter in today's *Church Times* says that the motion “Lacks the coherence and precision required for a really focused debate”. It describes paragraph (d), as it currently is - the letter was written before the motion was re-ordered - as “platitudinous.” We might ask ourselves, therefore, why we are spending time this afternoon debating it? Paragraph

(a), as you will see, commits us to give thanks for the increased turnout at the recent General Election and, "Calls upon parties to build on this by addressing the causes of voter apathy and non-participation".

If this is to be a meaningful motion and the time spent debating it this afternoon is to be well-spent, I suggest that we put forward a positive suggestion as to how voter apathy and non-participation in the democratic process might be addressed. So, why proportional representation by STV and lowering the voting age to 16? Well, a major cause of non-participation in many parts of the country is, I suggest, the failed first-past-the-post system.

As is well-known, in many constituencies, the result, whether to return a Conservative or a Labour Member of Parliament, is wholly predictable and it is in these safe seats that many people see little point in voting. The current system is also inherently unfair. Votes do not have equal weight. In the last election, had the seats been distributed according to the total percentage vote for each party, the Conservatives would have had 276 seats not 317; the Liberal Democrats, 48 not 12; the SNP, 20 not 35; the Green Party, ten rather than just the one in Brighton; UKIP would have had 12 seats not nine; Labour, oddly, would have had just two more, 262 instead of 260.

The single transferable vote system is not new in the UK. It is currently used in most elections in Northern Ireland and in the Scottish local elections. It is the electoral system used in the Republic of Ireland, in Malta and for the Australian Senate. The argument, of course, has been that first-past-the-post produces stable government. Perhaps in a two-party system that holds good, but we are no longer a two-party state. We have now had two elections in seven years that have resulted in a hung Parliament and have led to what I think has to be called 'horse-trading' between parties to put together a government that commands a majority vote in the House of Commons. Whether it is stable or not, of course, is an open question.

Surely, if we are to be doing this, it would be better if the Government was truly representative of the votes cast across the nation as a whole. There is a particular reason for including a call for PR by STV in this motion. It is that it is this Synod that conducts its own elections using this very system. We, as a Synod, can offer our experience as an example for the nation to follow. Note that it is single transferable vote not the alternative vote rejected in the Referendum in 2011. What about votes at 16? Both Labour and the Liberal Democrat parties included this as a proposal in their 2017 manifestos. At a hustings I chaired in my constituency, our Conservative candidate - now Member of Parliament - said that he was in favour, although it is not Tory Party policy.

Here, again, the Church has led the way. As you know, the electorate for electing members of this Synod are the members of deanery synods in the dioceses. Since 2004, a person can be elected to represent the parish in the deanery synod if he or she is 16 years or upwards. The Church made that change 13 years ago. I suggest what is good

for the Church is good for the country as a whole. We want to engage our young people in politics, so let us send a message from this Synod that we think they should have the vote at 16. Members of Synod, I ask you to support this amendment, which I formally move.

The Chair. I call upon the Archbishop of York to respond.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Members of Synod, when the Archbishop of Canterbury and I wanted this particular debate and the motion, which we put, because we thought sometimes actually it is better to stick to principles than detailed actions because those require much work, we did not realise that our motion itself would be like a Christmas tree on which many baubles are now being hung. I want to say to you, please, resist all of them.

I want to pick the words of Martin Kingston, who said, "These are just simply prickly things, they are not helping us in terms of our principles and in terms of our vision". I just remind the mover of the motion of the Plant Commission, which looked at the pros and cons of the different methods of arranging. Of course, he went for PR but that was never accepted. Of course, equally, remember we have had alternative voting which was also rejected in the nation, so you may bring this and find yourself that it too is rejected in the nation.

I want to have a vision which the Church can use and speak. William Temple in *Christianity and Social Order*, he always was very wise: It is better to stick to what you see are the Christian principles and the vision. What tends then to follow is what happened with the Beveridge Report, attacking the five giants. This is what we ought to be doing as a Church and not being very prickly with different amendments. I ask you to resist this one.

The Chair. Point of Order.

Revd Preb. Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Under Standing Order 32(1), I would like to propose a speech limit of 30 seconds for all speeches on Items 47, 48, 49, 50 and 51.

The Chair. Prebendary Cawdell, I am very grateful for your helpful intervention, but there are one or two matters I think with the Standing Orders which prevent us dealing with all of those cases in one go. I think you might find that I will be exercising my discretion from the Chair carefully and in response to what I sense is the mood of the Synod. I am sure the Synod will make its mood very clear. Item 47 is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield): Firstly, please vote this amendment down. The reason for voter apathy is not the single transferable vote. The reason for voter apathy is that people

are disillusioned, they are dispirited and they are disquieted about various national concerns, including Brexit and the entire political process, and their confidence in politicians is at a very low ebb. Caroline has already said that. The amendment is an attempt at a diversion into political process. I do not welcome that and it is against the spirit of this motion.

One of our documents here is about Presence and Engagement. As we have been reminded by the Archbishop and as we have been reminded by other speakers, we need to be engaged with our nation. To be engaged, we need to be making our voice heard. Please vote this amendment down. It is irrelevant. It is inaccurate. This is not the reason for voter apathy. It is also, in its own way, an attempt to move politically through this body in a way which I do not welcome.

I am saying that as a local independent politician. Some of us have to represent people elsewhere and we do it with good faith. I think we have to stand up for those people who are acting in good faith and we have to ignore this irrelevant, political and perverse amendment.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: a motion for closure on Item 47.

The Chair: I would just like to establish whether any member wishes to speak in favour of Item 47. Is there any member who wishes to speak in favour of Item 47?

Revd Paul Hutchinson (York): Yes, with a point of order.

The Chair: I am not sure if that is a speech in favour, Mr Hutchinson.

Revd Paul Hutchinson (York): It will all make sense when I get there.

The Chair: Is this a point of order?

Revd Paul Hutchinson (York): It is a point of order. In order to be in favour of something, the point of order being, under Standing Order 26, a request that the amendment be divided into two parts. As someone who has two people aged between the ages of 16 and 18 in my household who were more than a little displeased about their inability to vote in the recent General Election, I would be delighted if Synod made an expression of its view on lowering the voting age, which I do not think strays into the same political territory as the prior question. One might almost think it the angel on the top of the tree rather than one of the baubles being hung on the branches.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Hutchinson, but I have considered this previously and I am not minded to divide the proposed amendment at Item 47. If there is no one else standing - in fact, we do not need Mr Freeman, as much as we love him - there is no one standing, so I put the amendment at Item 47 to the vote.

The amendment

'At the end of paragraph (a), insert--

“, in particular, by:

- (iii) taking steps to change the current outdated and unfair voting system by introducing proportional representation by single transferable vote at Parliamentary elections (as used in this Synod); and*
- (iv) lowering the voting age to 16”*

was put and lost on a show of hands.

ITEM 48

The Chair: We move now to the amendment at Item 48 and I call Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams to speak to her amendment at Item 48 and at Item 50, but just to move her amendment at Item 48 for the moment. Mrs Williams, the speech limit is five minutes.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester): Most humbly, and with great respect, I would like to ask his Grace, the Archbishop of York, how naming the Gospel at the heart of this motion is a prickly thing? The great and glorious news is that as Christians we understand completely the notion of the common good. The Bishop of Southwark is quite right when he says that as Christians we understand and have something to say about social and political theology.

At her Coronation oath, 64 years ago, our Queen, Elizabeth, was presented with a Bible by the Archbishop of Canterbury. She was then asked this, “Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you maintain and preserve inviolably, the settlement of the Church of England, the laws and the disciplines therein...Our gracious Queen, to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the Law and the Gospel of God as the rule for the whole life and government of Christian princes, we present you with this Book, the Bible, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is wisdom, royal law. These are the lively oracles of God.”

What is the Gospel that the Queen and her Bishops accord to uphold? It is the Kingdom of God, the good news which extends its reach throughout all human history and to which all are subject, to which our Government is subject and which has marked out the great history of our nation and our institutions in education, in health, in charity, in industry, in law and in finance. It is why our systems, rooted in the Gospel, are copied across the world.

Since then - 1967, 50 years ago - we have passed laws which have meant that we have

not protected the most vulnerable of citizens in our nation. The Abortion Act means that in 50 years we have aborted nine million of our citizens, that is one seventh of our population. The most vulnerable place for a person to be in this nation at this time is in the mother's womb.

Since the 1960s, we have had a sexual revolution where sex became recreational and not procreational. With that, we have seen a rise in pornography; we have seen a rise in sexually transmitted diseases; we have seen not freedom but slavery. The beautiful picture of marriage, one man and woman and children to be raised within that contract, is a beautiful picture to be presented.

Since then, we have also seen, just in recent days, how Christian preachers have been brought to court for preaching the kinds of things that I have just said now; how nursing students, for believing that life is beautiful and precious and to be protected from the moment of conception, actually are taken off their courses; social workers who believe that children need mothers and fathers are also removed from university courses or lose their jobs and are pushed on.

That is why freedom is so important. Again, with the greatest of respect, your Grace, the Archbishop of York, to put the Gospel at the heart of a message to the nation on the political good, on the common good, is what we should do for the Bible sets out how now to live in a world that is lost and is hurting.

The Chair: I call on the Archbishop of York to respond.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Again, to use my old imagery, some more baubles have appeared on the Christmas tree, some of varying abilities and some with great difficulty. On number 50, there are many things there that one would want to disagree with really, but in order to give a full response it requires a very well-detailed argument. What I am going to say is this, actually, in my book does not seem to add anything, as far as I understand, to the motion we are trying to do today.

Then 48, which restricts the language of common good purely into the Bible. There are many traditions that have got a concept of common good. The real joy of the Church of England is what the Queen said at Lambeth Palace at the beginning of her Diamond Jubilee. She said that our Church of England is often not only misunderstood but also unappreciated. Its role is not to defend the Church of England but to serve the whole community. If you are going to be serving the whole community, please do not limit our language. I want to moan like He has moaned, the Word became flesh and, sadly, we are now making it Word and Word and Word again. Resist the amendments.

The Chair: Item 48 is open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): I too stand before you as an elected politician, albeit at a very humble level beside the lofty heights of Dame Caroline. When I am not serving you and the Church, I am a cabinet member in Essex County Council for Health and Adult Social Care. I just want to tell you two things.

First, I heard today that in my, apparently, prosperous county, I have an area which is now among the worst 20% in this country for life expectancy. I will be reaching out to politicians of every party in every part of my community to try to see what we do about that and I know absolutely that the answers will not lie among politicians alone.

Secondly, I have a budget of £627 million for the county for Health and Adult Social Care, and it is not enough. I look after somewhere around 15,000 people aged over 65, who are either in residential or domiciliary care with support from the Council, and a further 4,000 adults of working age with significant learning disabilities. £627 million is not enough but, think about it, I have 300,000 people aged over 65, so 85% are being looked after by spouses, families, volunteers and communities, and that means the Church.

According to all my experts, my number of elderly people will increase by 30% to 50% over the next 15 years; the number of over 80s will grow over 50%, and I will not be able to find that solution. I will be looking to the communities. The only organisation that is in every community of my county is the Church of England. It is the only organisation that has volunteers in every place to whom we can look and engage.

I will continue to battle with my county officials who sometimes think that the Church of England does not need to be involved. In speaking against this and every other amendment from the floor, I do so because this debate should not be about words. It should not be about this word or that.

It should be about a statement of intent, which says, "In this motion we tell you, Government, that you cannot do without us, that the power of the Gospel as personified in the Church of England is that which you will require to tackle the major issues facing us now and in the future". I look forward to telling my colleagues after this meeting that we, as a Church, are unified in our resolve to be at the heart of the solution.

Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Durham): I want to resist this amendment because I think it misunderstands and misrepresents the theological heritage of the Church of England. The phrase "common good" can sound a bit "motherhood and apple pie", but it actually is not. It is expressed as a very specific theological principle which is going to be explored as the Greenbelt theme later this year.

That is the principle of natural law, which was absolutely fundamental to the debates in the 16th and 17th centuries in which the Church of England was formed. That is the idea that God's will is not just revealed in the specific revelation of the Bible and the teachings

of the Church, but that there is also a much more general revelation of God's intentions for the world, available to everyone because it is written in the very fabric of Creation.

It seems to me that the original motion, as we have written, understands that and is appealing to that innate sense of justice and love and care for all that all people have access to. That is really important in framing a motion which we aim to be heard in our multicultural society and our multicultural parliaments. As we have seen in recent events, an impetus to help in times of trouble, to love, to mercy, to justice, to self-sacrifice, is not limited to those who self-identify as Christians.

I think it is really important that we resist this for theological and practical reasons. Practically, I think this amendment would have the unintended effect of making the motion much more easily ignored by people who do not self-identify as Christians. As the Second Church Estates Commissioner said, we need to be very aware of how our debates are heard in the wider world.

Theologically, this amendment, although the Bible and the Church sound good, betrays our Anglican heritage of this understanding of God's revelation to all people in the Book of Creation and appears to drive a wedge between the idea of the common good and a narrower sub-conception of that, which is the Christian understanding. I would want to say that the Christian understanding can only ever, surely, be as wide and, ideally, wider than what God means for the world in Creation. I beg you to resist this amendment.

The Chair: Members of Synod, we have heard two speeches resisting this amendment, are there any members who wish to speak in favour of it?

Revd Mark Lucas (Peterborough): I have not prepared a speech because I had not come thinking I was going to speak in this debate at all but, having listened to the speeches and thought about it, I am increasingly aware that we are living in a nation whose constitution is being hollowed out.

The Christian centre of it is disappearing altogether and it is becoming increasingly difficult to live and to be a Christian. We have seen that graphically illustrated in recent weeks with the resignation of the Leader of the Liberal Democrats; not a party which I particularly follow or support but, nevertheless, it is an horrific thing to see that a leader of a party feels the need to resign from that position because he can no longer be a Christian in what should be a Christian country.

To ask for the Christians ideals to be returned, or at least thought about seriously, is something that is deeply significant. Of all the people in this Synod who know how hard it is to live as a Christian, I am most impressed by Andrea for the work that she does day-by-day, and we need to listen to what she has to say.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 48.

The Chair. Mr Freeman has proposed a motion for closure on Item 48. That has my consent. I put the motion for closure on Item 48 to the Synod.

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

The Chair. I now put Item 48 to the Synod.

The motion was put and lost on a show of hands.

ITEM 49

The Chair. We now move to the amendment at Item 49 and I call on Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford to speak to and to move his amendment. You have up to five minutes.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I feel a little bit like Jesus at the moment; I think I am condemned before I open my mouth! I also have to start by declaring some interests. There is not a drop of Scottish blood in my veins. I have only been to Scotland once, for a fortnight, for a holiday with my grandmother when I was 11. In one sense you have already made my speech for me - all of you - because the biggest challenge to the union is what is happening in Scotland. With classic English arrogance, we forget Scotland. Yes, there are many pressing issues, it is very complicated, with no simple solutions, but we forget Scotland. Scotland voted to remain and we voted to leave. The same proportion of Scots voted to remain as Suffolk folk voted to leave. There is a deep wound in our union. It is the elephant in the room. How can we, even with the parliamentary system we have, dictate to another nation?

Also, I want to say that my colleague and I from St Edmundsbury & Ipswich did not put these motions in just to hang baubles on the Christmas tree. I would respectfully point out a Christmas tree is prickly and the baubles add beauty. We wanted to stimulate debate in what we thought was a very bland set of proposals and we have managed to achieve that. Doubtless we will pay the price of it subsequently. Nonetheless, the point remains. We are not always as bland as this. I remember two years ago when the House of Bishops produced *Who is My Neighbour?* No bland statements there. And the Scots have been our neighbours for a thousand years; our special neighbours for over 300, and yet so quickly we forget them and their concerns. We are called to be good neighbours not by the Church but by Christ himself. I know this motion is going to get voted down, but I will say this: if I receive an assurance from the platform that Scottish issues and the whole nation of Britain is going to be considered from now on, I will gladly withdraw it.

The Chair. The Archbishop of York to respond.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Anybody knows that the Scottish thistle has the wonderful words: "no one touches me with impunity". I do not

think this is our business. It may be interesting, but it is not our business. Since you are a student of the Old Testament, remember that the prophet from the north who went and prophesied south and they told him, "Go back where you've come from". I am sure the people in the north will also say, "It's none of your business; go back where you've come from". The other thing is I am not sure that the Scottish Episcopal Church has been consulted what its view is. If not, maybe that proves we English are very arrogant. Resist the thing.

The Chair: By "the thing", of course, his Grace means Item 49, which is now open for debate.

Dr John Appleby (Newcastle): First, I was born in Scotland - that does the "motherhood" bit - and my name is pretty close to "apple pie", so that is the other part of it. I declare myself as a serial failure as a parliamentary candidate. One might ask why I stand. This is mostly about the main motion, but I applaud the motion for its intention to state general principles. I think one of the things we need to do is to urge that calm. The still small voice story is not about calm at all; it is urging Elijah to get back in and carry on fighting. Be that as it may, we do need some calm in this situation.

With my repeated failures to get elected (although I was once a city councillor) why do I bother? The reason I bother is because I want to ask the right questions and to raise things on the agenda. I want to allow people who have a different view to vote for me, or at least for the principles for which I stand. One of the things I have always tried to do at public meetings, and indeed at the count when queuing up in third or fourth place after the announcement of the result, is, first, to say that the people alongside me, the other candidates, are there for the same reason I am; they are there because they wish to do the best for the public, and everybody needs to remember that. There needs to be respect for those candidates and part of what I try to do is to restore a little bit of that respect.

What is essential at the moment, and I applaud the statement by the Archbishops as well as this motion, is to try to get our politicians to calm down a bit, to recognise that some issues cannot be resolved within a normal parliamentary term and to please, please, please try to stop scoring points on things where, although there are legitimate differences, we must transcend that. The two big ones at the moment are Brexit and social care, which cannot be sorted in five years. Thank you.

The Chair: Could I remind members to try to keep their remarks to the specific words of the item that we have before us.

Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford): I think we are straying into political ground again, but I would like to make some very brief observations. First, there is no appetite among the majority of the people of Scotland for another referendum; they have voter fatigue. Secondly, no Scots outside of Scotland can take part, and there are enormous numbers of Scots who have shaped the United Kingdom and some very eminent Scots, one or two of whom are

here, who have been part of it. I wonder how many people here do not think of themselves as solely English. I know I have English, Scots, Welsh and Irish heritage. I would ask you to resist this. It is not the time to discuss it. I have a certain amount of interest because I am in the process of moving from Surrey to Edinburgh.

Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool): My interest is even more immediate in that my belongings are currently up in my new home in Glencoe, my cats are in Liverpool and I am here in York and I am soon to be licensed as Priest in Charge to the West Highland region. Until that happens I am part of the Church of England and after that happens I will belong to the Scottish Episcopal Church. I think that probably the only person in the room whose business this is, is Bishop John Armes - and me in ten or 11 days' time! It is not our business, as the Archbishop of York says.

Secondly, should the SEC decide among themselves within their own Synod to come up with a view, I would expect, at that point, the Church of England to be supporting them as a full Communion partner just as I would expect the Church of England to keep supporting the Scottish Episcopal Church as a full Communion partner in all things.

Mr Martin Kingston (Gloucester): Point of order. I give Mr Freeman the opportunity not to stir himself as to whether we might have a motion for closure.

The Chair: A motion for closure on Item 49 has been proposed. That has my consent so I put it to the Synod.

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

The Chair: I put the amendment at Item 49 to the Synod.

The motion was put and lost on a show of hands.

ITEM 52

The Chair: Because we are taking the amendments in the order in which they strike the text, we move now to Item 52, that is to say the amendment proposed by the Archbishop of York. He has already spoken to his amendment but I just invite him to move it formally.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): I do so formally.

The Chair: The text should be behind you on the screens. Item 52 is now open for debate. I see no one standing. If it helps I am going pause whilst you can all finish reading the text.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): That is what I was going to ask for. Thank you.

Revd Preb. Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Point of order, Chair. Could you read it out and then give us 30 seconds to digest it and then we might actually wish to speak on it?

The Chair: Thank you, Prebendary Cawdell.

The amendment at Item 52 is after paragraph (d) to insert: "Invite our co-dwellers in the United Kingdom of their own free will to top up their income tax from their net monthly pay to supplement public expenditure on education, health and social care, and request HMRC to consult all taxpayers on whether they would be willing to do this".

Mrs Enid Barron (London): I was not planning to speak on this aspect of the motion, although I wanted to speak on the broader motion. I spot a slight flaw - dare I say that to the Archbishop - in the amendment in that, although I would be very happy to put money into those things, we are not able to specify where our tax money goes except through the General Election. I know there is a very good economic term for this and when I was in the Civil Service I knew what it was but I have forgotten it. Hypothecating - that is it. Thus you cannot say, "Yes, this is fine, if you put it into schools". I do not want my tax money to go to buy more bombs, frankly, and I do not particularly want it spent on getting out of Europe, so although I think the intention behind this is excellent, it is, dare I say it, not appropriate; we cannot really vote on this.

Dr Chris Angus (Carlisle): I have a very short intervention. Could I respectfully suggest that the costs of the HMRC changing their systems to allow this to happen would be magnitudes greater than whatever might be raised from it?

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 52.

The Chair: I think I would just like to invite any member who wishes to support the amendment to speak. Is there any such member?

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I would like to support it, not because it says precisely what I would like it to say, but because it is very close to something which is very dear to my heart, which is people paying for the universal benefits that they use, if they are well able to afford them out of their own pocket, and doing so on a voluntary basis.

I remember once going to a Conservative Party lunch where Sajid Javid was speaking and I remember saying that giving out universal benefits in that way - and I illustrated my free bus pass, which I use every day as I do not have a driving licence and I am a higher rate taxpayer - was quite wrong and I should have the opportunity to pay for it voluntarily. He said to do so voluntarily would be an unusual thing and compulsorily would be electoral suicide, and indeed Theresa May proved that point when she brought up the whole issue of social care and issues such as the Winter Fuel Payment in the election. I still believe that a voluntary system would be extremely effective because most higher rate taxpayers do have to put in a tax return and there is no reason why they should not put on their tax

return when they send children to school or they go to surgery or hospital, when they use a bus pass, and so on, and that would be a voluntary way of people contributing. I think that is what this amendment is getting at. I like it for that. If we could see ourselves supporting it, no matter the fact that it would take a lot of working out to do it, hypothecation is okay if it goes into the universal services that you use day-by-day and you can afford to pay for them. Thank you.

Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Point of order. I wish to help the Archbishop. If we take clause (e) as far as the phrase “social care” and stop there, that makes it a voluntary thing for Christians to do and does not involve HMRC and avoids hypothecation. If we delete the rest of it then this can be added in. I do realise that there is great risk in adding baubles to Christmas trees, but I offer this as a way forward.

The Chair: I want to retain a common approach, and so I do not intend to divide the amendment that has been proposed.

Mr Brian Wilson (Southwark): I would like to speak against this motion. I think it is unnecessary. People give voluntarily from their own generosity without a motion from the Church of England to do so. I receive various benefits which I return to various charitable causes and I do not do it via the Revenue. I can do it perfectly well by myself and so can everybody else here. Please vote against this motion.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 52.

The Chair: I am in the Synod’s hands. Mr Freeman has proposed a motion for closure. I am content to put that to you.

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

The Chair: That is very clearly carried. I now put the amendment at Item 52 to the Synod.

The motion was put and lost on a show of hands.

ITEM 50

The Chair: Mrs Minichiello-Williams has already spoken to her amendment at Item 50, but I invite her now to formally move it.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester): I formally move the amendment.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mrs Minichiello-Williams. The Archbishop to respond, please.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): I have already responded when I spoke on 48 and then 50 as well.

The Chair: Thank you, your Grace. The amendment at Item 50 is now open for debate.

A Speaker: Point of order.

The Chair: I see no one standing. Sorry, was there a point of order? I see one person standing.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Revd Professor Mark Chapman (Oxford): I am sure the Chair is likely to resist any idea of taking this in paragraphs, but it does strike me as the only bit of this motion that really has guts is the very first of those: "To reduce the huge gap between rich and poor in the UK". My understanding of biblically based speech might be Mary and the Magnificat, which we say every night, and this seems to me to be taking that quite seriously. I am not sure I would want to include anything else that stands in Mrs Minichiello-Williams' name but certainly the first of those clauses there does strike me as at the heart of the Christian Gospel.

The Chair: I see no one else standing. I am afraid Professor Chapman guessed correctly. Having listened to this, looking at the debate and the complexity of what we have been dealing with today, it seems to me that I should take the same approach in all cases, so I do not propose to divide the proposed amendment. With no one standing I put Item 50 to the vote.

The motion was put and lost on a show of hands.

ITEM 51

The Chair: That is clearly lost. We move now to Item 51 and I invite Mr Clive Scowen to speak to and to move his amendment at Item 51. You have up to five minutes.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I rejoice that we have two Archbishops who speak so freely of Jesus in the public square and have such an evident passion to see our nation re-evangelized. This amendment seeks to align Synod with that passion and the lead that the Archbishops are giving us and urges all of us, all of our Church - our consecrated and ordained leaders but also all lay people in their communities, in their families, in their workplaces, in their leisure time, in Parliament (those few who are there) - to commend faith in Jesus Christ to our fellow country people. These are anxious and uncertain times for many in our society and they need to know that Jesus reigns and that in Him there is peace that surpasses any human understanding or any political philosophy. Many in our society feel despondent, fearful and hopeless and they need to know that in Jesus Christ

there is hope for our nation and for every nation, hope of real life-giving transforming change both in their personal lives and in that of our communities, as people put their trust in Christ and receive the power of the Holy Spirit to change them and to change their communities, their families and, ultimately, the nation.

This has happened before. One only has to look to the 17th and 18th centuries to see how the Gospel of Jesus and hope in Christ brought about massive change in our whole nation. The whole nation did not become Christians, but enough did that it transformed our nation, and slavery was abolished and a whole range of social reforms occurred. All the good things that the motion calls on the Church to do in terms of prayer, work and advocacy; they are all important and they are all part of the mission that God has entrusted to us. But at the heart of our mission, at the heart of our vision for our nation must always be Jesus; as I have heard Canon Spence say often in this chamber, a vision of the risen Christ at the heart of all our communities. Jesus is the Church's USP, so to speak. Without him we have nothing to offer our nation that cannot be provided just as well, if not better, by others, but if we make it our priority to take every opportunity to point people to Jesus and to invite them to trust him, we will make a unique contribution to the life of our nation which has the potential to transform it at every level, including our political life and discourse, including in the way that Government and Parliament operates, right down to the very smallest level of community and family. I do urge Synod to take this amendment seriously as providing a core and a heart - a trunk if you like - for the Christmas tree.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Again, this is one of those amendments which we cannot really argue against. We have been going through that wonderful period of *Thy Kingdom Come*, the Archbishop of Canterbury and I having started it last year and doing it again this year, involving nearly all Christian denominations of the world, including the Pope, so we are really very clear in getting the Gospel out. I feel that a motion such as this has its proper place but not in the motion we have at the moment.

All I can do is remind Mr Scowen of my countryman who arrives from Uganda to do a mission in this country, invited by his overseas partners, and lands at Heathrow and he looks at two gates: "Nothing to declare" and "Something to declare" and he goes through the "Something to declare" gate. He goes through and the Customs people say to him, "Sir, what have you got to declare?" "I declare to you that Jesus is the Son of God. He died and rose again and the Lord has declared him Lord and Saviour and He demands of everybody repentance" - blah blah blah - "and the Holy Spirit has been given. I declare this news to you" They said, "Really, we're not interested in what you may tell us; we're interested in what is in your suitcase". Then he goes on, "What is in my suitcase is not important. What is most important is that I declare to you that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was born and rose again", and it went on like this. We were waiting for about two hours until they let him out. Eventually, they opened his suitcase and they found only his clothes in there, there was nothing of value. They told him, "There's nothing of value, so

you shouldn't have come through here", and "No, no, I come through this door", and he says, "I told you, what I have got is valueless but I declare to you that Jesus is the Son of God, he died and rose again". Resist the amendment.

The Chair: The amendment at Item 51 is now open for debate.

Mrs Susannah Leafe (Truro): Your Grace, the story of your friend from Uganda, my heart was warmed to hear of someone wanting to declare the truth to people. It may not be appropriate in our culture to do that but there is a real joy there. When some Primates were in this country they stayed in a hotel and when I spoke to the Primates at the end of their time, I said, "What was the best thing about gathering together here?" and they said, "We led the barman to Christ on Saturday evening".

Please can we not be English about this. The world has a great and desperate need to hear the Gospel. Please can we take every opportunity to commend to people the joy of knowing Christ, the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace and the hope of every nation. I am sure that we all recognise when we need to be sensitive in the ways that we take those opportunities, but to decide to smash this bauble on the floor because other baubles were inappropriate I think would be a missed opportunity.

Mrs Kathy Playle (Chelmsford): I will not waste time: ditto. She has said what I was going to say.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs Playle. The lady in pink. It is actually a shade of rose, is it not?

Mrs Helen Lamb (Ely): I bow to your superior knowledge.

The Chair: I am afraid the light is terrible in here.

Mrs Helen Lamb (Ely): I am really grateful for the way that this debate has been conducted so far in the non-partisan expression that there has been for the motion and for the positive value of engaging in our political processes.

In my personal opinion, a key reason why our political discourse is so unedifying is because of the pretensions of moral superiority that seem to accompany it. Labour voters are characterised as naïve at best and short-sighted or stupid at worst. Tory votes are tarred as self-interested or downright venal. Let us not even remember what Brexit voters were called. Yet our churches must surely, mostly, contain all of these, possibly even UKIP voters too.

Incidentally, I never liked the description of the Church of England as "the Tory Party at prayer", but I do not much prefer the description that it is "the Labour Party's moral action group".

It is the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is hard to vote against this amendment because he is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Our support for any political philosophy will always be tempered by the knowledge that most of all we need a Saviour. I asked a question that was misunderstood seemingly about the advice of restraint for clergy in the expression of party political views and it was answered as if I had suggested that the Gospel had no political implications. Of course it does, but, Clergy, you have a responsibility.

Be politically engaged, but just think about whether what you are expressing on a Tweet, or in public is partisan and party political and risks alienating some who you might be seeking to reach with Jesus. Please consider whether your tone is constructive and positive or superior and point scoring. Surely out of all of that, let us be ready to give an answer for the ultimate hope that we have, always knowing that the Lord Jesus is at the very core of everything we do, otherwise please feel free to join your political parties, stand to be an MP, be as partisan as you like, but do not do it on behalf of the Church that belongs to the Lord Jesus.

The Chair: Are there any members who wish to speak against this particular amendment?

Ven. Martin Gorick (Oxford): I have been ordained 30 years ago this summer. I take the Lord Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour; I devoted my life to him many decades ago. My house in Oxford is built on the foundations, far underneath, of the old medieval synagogue which once existed there in what was called Great Jewry in those days. The members of that synagogue underwent terrible persecution at the hands of the Christian authorities. In that synagogue they were required, with soldier escort, to hear Christian conversion preaching week after week on their Sabbath day. Eventually, they were driven out of England altogether, and Oxford, all their possessions confiscated.

What seems an innocuous and lovely amendment here talks about reducing anxiety and uncertainty by commending faith in Jesus Christ to all people in England. I know my Jewish friends will take that as including them; they have heard it all before. If you go on YouTube and type in "Britain First Christian patrols", you will see them trying to do - they claim - exactly what this says, with four foot high crosses walking through Muslim majority areas of Luton and elsewhere. This is not received as a wonderful gift and the words of this will, in a sense, encourage that kind of behaviour.

It is difficult because I love the Lord Jesus, but I love all people in this nation and our motion needs to speak of the common good for all. Please turn down the amendment.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: may I propose a motion for closure on this item.

The Chair: Mr Freeman has proposed a motion for closure on this item. That has my consent, so I put the motion for closure to the Synod.

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

The Chair: That is very clearly carried. I now put the amendment at Item 51 to the Synod.

The motion was put and lost on a show of hands.

The Chair: We now return to debate on Item 46. The speech limit is three minutes. I call the Bishop of Chichester followed by Sean Doherty.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Bishop of Chichester (Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner): Sussex MPs are a cheerful, diverse and impressive bunch, but I have noticed recently a gloom at the prospect of tight control by party whips on both sides of the House in the present Parliament. The pressure on MPs of all parties to be available for voting in the House will inevitably limit their time and energy for constituency work and the range of other engagements through which they both contribute to wider society and are informed by its needs and concerns. The danger is that Parliament becomes increasingly focused on the political processes of winning or losing a vote - a bit like us. If MPs are not allowed to be fully attentive to the needs and experience of those they serve, they run the risk of destabilising the checks and balances that make for the ordering of a healthy society.

At our best, in the Church of England, we have been perceptive and persistent in pointing to the ways in which poor process and government can damage social cohesion and trust and flourishing. In the wake of the catastrophe of the fire at Grenfell Tower, the Bishop of Kensington has been raising important questions about trust and the ordering of a healthy society.

Watching Victoria Derbyshire on daytime telly recently, as I was waiting to see a very scary dental hygienist, I heard a serious theological question from a woman who had been a resident in the tower who said this: "What is a human? What is a human?" That is a question we should be answering as Christians from inherited and shared wisdom in ways that challenge dependency, deprivation and exclusion in our national life today. We are too often confronted by political expedience that prioritises numbers and results above persons and relationships and leads inevitably to a distorted view of what a human being is.

A human is made in the image of God and loved by God unconditionally in the hope of redemption. This identity cannot be reduced to a number or commodified by process. A human has the capacity for imagination which, if starved of instances of one's own goodness, joy, beauty and love, will become destructive. Humans are subjected to

excessive testing because we have given priority to the skill set of trade in the marketplace in which you clinch your deal and win your vote. These are skills rated more highly than emotional intelligence, art as the physics of the imagination and drama as the therapy of experience.

“What we need is not division, we need love”, words spoken by Bobby Kennedy in 1968, and we need leaders who will speak like that.

Revd Dr Sean Doherty (London): I wish to speak in support of the motion and particularly in support of paragraph (e), although I winced when I read the word “example” and initially thought to myself, “What right do we have, as the Church of England, with all our imperfections and failings, of which I am sure we are aware, to commend ourselves as an example to the Government?” The more I thought about it the more I thought perhaps there are some things after all.

On 9 June, I was living for the first time in a Labour constituency in Kensington when a Labour MP was returned by a majority of just 20 votes after three recounts. Just a few days later, on 14 June, I was woken in the early hours by sirens and looking out of my bedroom window saw the horrific sight of Grenfell Tower covered in flames. I will not go into any more details of what I saw, but it was very distressing, as you would understand.

People became aware for two reasons, one arguably good and one certainly bad, that Kensington is an area which is much more diverse than one might expect. The Tower is 250 yards from my house, so I put on my dog collar, woke my wife and went out to see what I could do. I got the privilege of waking up the vicar and explaining to him what was going on.

The first thing is - this is why we can be an example - we are there. I was not first on the scene because I am some slick professional or a whizzy Alpha vicar, as Giles Fraser put it in an article a few days later, but because I live there, and so does the vicar, the parish priest.

Secondly, we can be an example because we have visibility in that place. We put our collars on, we opened the building and people started coming in. The number of people who simply said, “Thank you for doing this”. We are the Church of England, we know what to do in a crisis: we put the urn on, we made tea. It was simple acts of humanity and things such as the firefighters coming in to use the loo. I saw one firefighter kneeling to pray briefly before going back out to join the fray. We are visible.

It was interesting that after the fire, in the dreadful aftermath, one of the reasons for which politicians and the council in particular were criticised was their supposed lack of visibility. We are there and we have visibility. We had the opportunity to work with others. Muslims, particularly, who were awake in Ramadan were amongst the first to come and offer to help. I do not know how they rustled up the level of supplies that they did in the middle

of the night, but it was amazing. Later on that morning I went to the Church of England primary school, at which I am a governor, and saw the work they were doing in terms of providing a stable environment for the children. Most of us, thankfully, are not called to that level of tragedy but we are there too and so we can be an example too. Thank you.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): I think that speech by Sean sums up many of the particular things I wanted to say so I will cut back rather.

In the last year, one of the things that has become more apparent is that the long-term way in which our sense of identity has become more blurred reached some kind of crisis and culmination. We are very much in a society where there are rival attempts to seize and proclaim mutually exclusive identities. Brendan Cox, who I met earlier this year, is so extraordinary because he is fighting against that in such a powerful and convincing way.

If, as the Church, we are going to fight against this breakdown of identity, it seems to me there are two things in particular that are necessary. One is that we have a clarity of common narrative of speaking for the common good, and that is why I welcome the Archbishop of York's motion so strongly. It needs to be a clarity of narrative that develops over time. Just because we do not say everything in one motion does not mean we disagree with things we have not said; we take some of them as just givens.

Our common narrative needs both to rebuke those who exert strength without conscience and those who manipulate need to their own advantage and to speak of the common good. Our common narrative is only convincing when it is accompanied by common action and there has been much said this afternoon, particularly about the Queen's Lambeth Speech at her Diamond Jubilee, of the role and calling of the Church of England, which is ever more important.

I was going to say something about Grenfell Tower because I was also there on the day of the fire - it is not far from where I live - and saw exactly what Sean saw, except he said it better than me so I do not intend to repeat it. It was very, very beautiful indeed.

We also do the same thing in so many ways in less dramatic times in our schools, the "*Vision for Education. Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*", in Near Neighbours, in every chaplaincy and parish. This motion calls us to be confident in that so that we are confident in who we are under God and that we are confident in what we say. That is why I hope we will support this motion overwhelmingly because it speaks to our confidence in our position in this country.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 46.

The Chair: Mr Freeman has put the motion for closure on Item 46. We have timed business at 6 o'clock so that has my consent. I put the motion for closure to the Synod.

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

The Chair: That has been clearly carried. I call on the Archbishop of York to respond to the debate. You have about five minutes, your Grace.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Thank you very much. I think we owe you a great deal for the way in which you have enabled us to have a conversation amidst all kinds of very complicated things. Thank you very much for your support.

Secondly, I want to apologise to Synod that I did not give my amendment in time because I have been praying for over three weeks, “What will I say? Lord, give me wisdom”, and I am one of those where wisdom is always lastminute.com. That is why you did not get it.

All I can say is that somehow we have to find a way as a Church to support the 48% who want more taxes to go towards education, towards health and towards social care. There is a mood in the country and we have to find the language. My motion may not have been a good way of doing it.

The rejection of hypothecation of tax proposed by Frank Field many, many years ago has actually stopped every British taxpayer from being a philanthropist. Some people want to give money to a particular specific on top of other things and we have got to find an answer somehow. William Temple, when he proposed that interest rates should only be determined by the Bank of England and not credit companies, when he was speaking to a huge congregation in the Albert Hall, everybody walked out. How right he was! An answer has to be found on what we do with this difficulty of funding.

As to Caroline Spelman, thank you very much. Indeed, her voice is always there. I want to pay tribute to the Lords Spiritual in the House of Lords who always make sure that the message of Jesus Christ is not necessarily couched in a language which will alienate but in a language that is very clear.

To Debbie, pray for wisdom, we all need it. To Martin Gainsborough, again happy with what we are trying to do in the motion. On all the things that somehow you are not very sure about, in the end I do not think we are timid. We want to be as cunning as serpents but also wise as doves, and the motion tries to do both.

To Nick, you are absolutely right, we need to tell good stories and some of us are not very good at telling good stories. Rabbi Herzog would say that in a democracy some are involved in what some are doing and some are guilty but all are responsible, so you gave us a message of the need for us to own up.

To the Bishop of Southwark, thank you for thinking a still small voice can have many words, but nevertheless you supported the motion as it stands. Again, you gave us the four questions which will not go away and have to be dealt with. I hope Mission and Public Affairs, having taken down a lot of the notes, will one day come back on what we need to do as a Church.

Again, Penny Allen wanted us to be engaged. Yes, we must be engaged. John Spence, as always, the question of very clear intent and a resolve to be at the heart of what we are doing. Thank you very much. Miranda Threlfall-Holmes, thank you for your contribution about the common good that is not found just in Scripture but you will find this God of creation. As Gerard Manley Hopkins said, "The whole of creation is charged with God's splendour", and you can see it there.

Jonathan Alderton-Ford, on Scotland and other things, maybe one day you can buy a house in Scotland and you could campaign there as well. John Appleby, you are quite right to get everybody not to think that when you stand, other people's views are less honourable than yours. We need to raise the game in terms of trust in terms of our politics. Anne Martin and Amanda Fairclough, thank you very much for what you said.

Clive Scowen, I hope the motion being lost does not mean that we are rejecting that Jesus is the Lord of everything else and that we Bishops are proclaiming Him. Come to the Northern Province where bishops are taking missions in other people's dioceses. It will warm your heart to see what the Lord is actually doing there. Rejecting your motion does not actually mean rejecting the doctrine and the life. What is being rejected is that it should be part of this motion. I hope you will take it away in that way.

Helen Lamb, again, yes, Jesus is Lord of all. I am one of those who constantly is proclaiming Him, but I also know sometimes when not to do it in order that I am given a greater grip. The Bishop of Southwark told me I was a Yorkshire Terrier; I never let go and only do so to get a firmer grip. I know when a firmer grip is needed and when you need to let go.

For everybody who has contributed, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the things you have said, I hope they are written up so that together we can find a way. Members of Synod, thank you for your patience, forbearance, for the engagement. May these principles and the Gospel of Jesus Christ constantly encourage us that we have a voice, a Gospel to claim and to live, and in our parishes things are happening and it is exciting. Thank you very much.

The Chair: I now put Item 46 to the vote.

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

The Chair: Thank you very much, members of Synod. That has been a long session and you have handled it well. That concludes this item of business. Thank you.

ITEM 7 QUESTIONS

THE CHAIR *Dean of Southwark (Very Revd Andrew Nunn)* took the Chair at 5.23 pm

The Chair: We move to Questions. There are a lot of questions, so if we are going to make any progress with them I would really appreciate if you are going to ask a supplementary that it be very concisely formed and to the point and then we can get as far as we can on these Questions. Thank you very much.

Questions 1 to 28 are to the House of Bishops. Questions 1 to 3 will be addressed by the Archbishop of York. Question 1 from Miss Emma Forward, question 2 from Mrs Rosemary Lyon and question 3 from Mr Jeremy Harris.

House of Bishops

1. *Miss Emma Forward (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Tim Farron has resigned as leader of the Liberal Democrat Party, explaining that “I seem to have been the subject of suspicion because of what I believe and who my faith is in”. Considering this, does the Church consider that it is no longer possible for Christians to have high-profile roles in British politics, especially if they are seen to hold counter-cultural beliefs? If so, what can the Church of England do about this situation?

2. *Mrs Rosemary Lyon (Blackburn)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the light of recent events, will the Council be considering whether it remains possible for a Christian to be a prominent politician in the UK today?

3. *Mr Jeremy Harris (Chester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In light of the deselection of Andrew Turner MP and the resignation of Tim Farron as the leader of the Liberal Democrats, what steps will the Church take to help Christian politicians to be faithful Christians?

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: With permission, Chair, I will take questions 1, 2 and 3 together.

The presence of many practising Christians, including Anglicans, in all the major political parties today, shows that it is perfectly possible for a Christian to take a prominent place in political life. The Prime Minister is a case in point, as were the last two Labour Prime Ministers. Many other members of both Houses of Parliament are evidence of the prominent role that Christians can take in the public square and in political life today. There is an unambiguous connection between religion and politics. Those who would

sever it are relegating their Creator to the spectator's gallery. The Kingdom of God is not only the Almighty's goal for eternity; it also outlines what He wants for us now.

There are many support systems in place for Christian politicians, including the cross-party Christians in Parliament group and the Christian groupings within each of the main parties. The Church's Parliamentary Unit is in close and supportive contact with all those groups and many of their individual members.

These questions illustrate the timeliness of the *Setting God's People Free* Report. Let us all learn, and live it.

The Chair: Are there any supplementaries?

Miss Emma Forward: Does the House of Bishops acknowledge Tim Farron's statement that, "I seem to have been the subject of suspicion because of what I believe and who my faith is in?" and does it take seriously the concerns of Synod members as expressed by three separate questions?

The Archbishop of York: Sorry, I was not paying attention at all.

The Chair: I could see that, but thank you for your honesty.

The Archbishop of York: I was just recovering from the last marathon. Could she ask the question again, please, Sir, if you will indulge me, so that I can answer it?

The Chair: I will indulge you but you owe me. Could you ask that question again, please? It was lovely.

Miss Emma Forward: Does the House of Bishops acknowledge Tim Farron's statement that, "I seem to have been the subject of suspicion because of what I believe and who my faith is in"? Does it take seriously the concerns of Synod members as expressed by three separate questions?

The Archbishop of York: I think the House of Bishops would be in quite a difficult position to try and answer other people's perceptions. What is important here is that you should read my article I wrote in the *Telegraph* going almost in a similar direction.

4. *Mrs Helen Lamb (Ely)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In view of the request by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York for Sir Philip Mawer to report "with the minimum of delay" on the concerns regarding the operation of the House of Bishops' declaration of May 2014 and the Five Guiding Principles, when is his report expected to be made public?

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: I understand that Sir Philip Mawer has gathered most, but not all, of the extensive evidence for his report and will be drafting it over the next few weeks. He will then need to check various passages with those on whose evidence they are based. He intends to present his report to myself and Archbishop Justin in September, with a view to its publication as soon as possible thereafter. Sir Philip plans to confirm the precise date of publication as soon as is clear.

5. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Does the House agree with the proposition that “mutual flourishing” as described in the House of Bishops Declaration (GS Misc 1076), is equally applicable to the large majority whose theological convictions led them to support the ordination and consecration of women, to ordained and consecrated women themselves and to those whose theological convictions led them to oppose such ordinations and consecrations?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: Yes. “Mutual flourishing” means what it says. The Five Guiding Principles speak of “mutual flourishing across the whole Church of England”. The House of Bishops’ Declaration reflects our desire to establish a climate of trust within which all can flourish, despite the differences of theological conviction which will continue to exist on this issue.

6. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the ten years that have passed since the overwhelmingly endorsed Pilling Review Talent and Calling (GS 1650) into the making of senior church appointments, which recommended that:

“bishops should be asked to indicate which (if any) of those currently on the List from their dioceses are from a conservative evangelical background. Bishops should be asked positively to look for clergy from this constituency who might either be qualified for inclusion on the Preferment List or might be developed in such a way that they might be qualified later on.” (4.4.1),

- a commitment to the diversity of the Church affirmed more recently in the House of Bishops’ Declaration of May 2014 -

“All bishops have a shared responsibility for the welfare of the whole Church of England. It will be important that senior leadership roles within dioceses continue to be filled by people from across the range of traditions”;

what proposals are there to strengthen by action not just by word the commitment to mutual flourishing so that there be no repeat of a selection for senior office being resisted by some in such manner as to lead the candidate to withdraw, as happened recently in Sheffield?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: In March this year the Archbishop of York and I wrote to Sir Philip Mawer, the Independent Reviewer under the Resolution of Disputes Procedure, raising concerns that had arisen following the nomination of Bishop Philip North to the see of Sheffield. In doing so, we asked Sir Philip to investigate a number of aspects of the operation of the House of Bishops' Declaration. In addition to specific questions relating to the particular nomination, we raised the general question of what had been done in the Church to inform and educate clergy and laity about the settlement agreed in 2014, and the effect of the Declaration within that settlement. Sir Philip's work is ongoing. Once we have received his report, the Archbishop of York and I will consider what lessons need to be learned and take these forward, both with the House of Bishops and in the Church more widely.

Mrs Mary Durlacher: Does the Archbishop accept that the events in Sheffield have significantly undermined the confidence that traditional Catholics and Evangelicals feel in the concept of mutual flourishing and that, whilst Philip Mawer's report will undoubtedly be helpful, confidence will only be restored when someone of those distinctive theological convictions is appointed to a diocese?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: Thank you very much indeed for the question. However, I think it really would be unfair of me to pre-empt Philip Mawer's work and therefore I really do not want to comment further until we have seen what he says.

7. *Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given the Archbishops' request following the debate on GS 2055 at the February Group of Sessions "for every Diocesan Bishop to meet with their General Synod members for an extended conversation in order to establish clearly the desires of every member of Synod for the way forward", which dioceses have still to meet and why have these meetings been so delayed?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: The Archbishop of York and I are not in the habit of closely monitoring how and when colleagues in the House of Bishops respond to every request that we make. The letter was published less than five months ago and there will inevitably be logistical challenges in arranging suitable opportunities for an 'extended meeting' of all involved. We are however glad to have heard from some Bishops already regarding the conversations they have been able to have.

Ms Jayne Ozanne: I know that many Synod members with whom I have spoken have very much appreciated the opportunity to speak with their Bishops in these follow-up meetings, but at the same time there is disappointment and frustration amongst those who have not yet met. Is the Chair aware of this disappointment and the message that this sends to those who now feel radically excluded?

The Archbishop of Canterbury: If I was not before, but thank you for the question, I am now. All I can say is that we have encouraged the Bishops to arrange these meetings and, as the written answer says, we are seeking to do that. In some cases that may be difficult to do, but it is being done bit by bit. Thank you.

8. *Canon Jenny Humphreys (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The total membership and support staff of the Pastoral Advisory Group and the Episcopal Teaching Document Group with its Co-ordinating Group and Thematic Working Groups are listed in GS Misc 1158 as 21 men and 8 women, with 28 of these being ordained and 1 lay. Will the House of Bishops please address this gender imbalance and clerical dominance when it comes to the wider consultations mentioned?

9. *The Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TElS)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What steps are being taken to ensure that the themed groups as outlined in GS Misc 1158 which will contribute to a Teaching Document on “human” sexuality are at least somewhat balanced in terms of gender?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied as Chair of the House of Bishops: With permission, Chair, I will take questions 8 and 9 together. In putting all these groups together, we are seeking to ensure that a very wide range of differing experiences, views, perspectives and areas of expertise are included. GS Misc 1158 makes it clear that many places on the groups remain to be filled and it is premature to comment on the balances within the overall membership as we have not got there yet.

Canon Jenny Humphreys: Given that similar concerns were expressed about the initial Renewal and Reform groups, would the Archbishop please say what measures the House of Bishops will take to ensure that a better gender and lay-clerical balance is assured at this time? Thank you.

The Archbishop of Canterbury: Thank you very much for the question. There is much that could be said about populating the groups. I know that we have been working extremely hard to try to get a balance of gender, BAME and also, which is seldom mentioned, disability, although that is normally neglected when people ask about this. That obviously has to coincide with particular skills academically, as well as being clear that there needs to be, to use the phrase the Archbishop of York and I have used, a “radical Christian inclusion”. Most people just say “radical inclusion”, which is not what we said at all.

It is a work in progress. The list that we have at the moment is by no means complete and definitive. I am absolutely certain that the Secretary General William Nye will be completely delighted with any suggestions of people who would be appropriate and who bring with them the necessary qualifications. We are populating it slowly. It has been a complex process. In the end, it is not going to be representative in the sense of being

tokenistic. People will not go on the groups simply because they tick a particular box but because they are capable of, at the highest possible level, arguing the case that needs to be argued. We will make sure that in each group there are people who will argue the case in a way that reflects the range of views across the churches as well as the Church of England. I hope that satisfies, but, yes, we are taking very, very active steps to make sure that it is not monochrome in any way.

The Chair: Thank you.

10. *Revd Paul Hutchinson (York)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In February 2015 (in the light of 'Pilgrim' 2013, and 'Developing Discipleship', GS 1977) Synod invited the House of Bishops to prepare a new Revised Catechism with a view to its approval by the General Synod under Canon B2. References to the development of this Catechism can be found at GS Miscs 1116, 1124, 1131, and in the 2016 Annual Report of the Archbishops' Council (GS 2058) at page 12. What progress has been made towards bringing this matter before Synod?

The Bishop of Exeter (Rt Revd Robert Atwell) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops, having given the matter due consideration, decided not to proceed with the proposal for a new Revised Catechism. Instead, the authors of the Pilgrim course were invited to produce a teaching resource which sets out the basis of the Christian faith in a succinct form as a part of that course, which is a central part of the current focus on discipleship. The Pilgrim resource will not therefore be a formal, authoritative statement of the teaching of the Church of England, or a replacement for the currently authorized Catechisms (the BCP Catechism and the Revised Catechism last authorized in 1994). Church House Publishing and Communications are preparing to trial the new materials in print and digitally as part of a suite of resources for Pilgrim later this year.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Bishop, you have told us that the House decided not to proceed with the proposal for a new Revised Catechism, but you have not told us why. What was the reasoning of the House, having expressed some enthusiasm for this previously, or others having expressed enthusiasm? What was the reasoning of the House in deciding not to proceed?

The Bishop of Exeter: There were two reasons. One was wholly pragmatic, working out actually the amount of time that it would take to refine such a text going through the system, but the other thing is that, when we had that debate, there was also a great concern that there should be a whole suite of resources to foster and stimulate discipleship, and that was the urgent thing. So we are setting those things side by side.

As we reflected upon that, what we decided to do was to take a more imaginative course. As you know, we have two catechisms: we have the Book of Common Prayer catechism, which is there, and then there is also the Revised Catechism which was authorised in

1994. We were concerned that actually we could go through a lot of time and effort to get a text and then it would just be on the shelf and not referred to. So the imaginative approach, which we are exploring, is that it should not simply be published, but also that it should be a digital communication at the heart of a whole suite of resources for discipleship. We look forward to the launch of the new Church of England website of which those things will be part and, therefore, in a generation in which the visual is as important as the word, we hope that actually the way it is going to be presented, particularly mindful of the fact that 97% of the population actually are not worshipping in the Church of England and that actually would encourage them to explore the riches of the Christian faith and discipleship today.

11. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Since the provision for a clergy capability procedure under the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Regulations 2009 came into effect:

- (a) on how many occasions has the formal capability procedure been invoked;
- (b) on how many occasions has removal from office been the outcome;
- (c) where an office holder has been removed from office, what is the average length of time from the commencement of the informal stage of the procedure to the end of the process; and
- (d) in view of the information contained in GS 2072 section 7, footnote 5, when can the Synod expect to receive a report following the review of the capability procedure which is currently being undertaken by the Remuneration & Conditions of Service Committee?

The Bishop of Portsmouth (Rt Revd Christopher Foster) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The objective of the procedure is to help office holders whose performance falls below an acceptable standard to improve. It provides a framework for a comprehensive appraisal of performance and a plan of consistent, healthy challenge, support and feedback.

Dioceses are not required to report on their use of the procedure and we are unable to provide such data. Anecdotally we understand that those undergoing the procedure either improve in their current posts, find alternative posts, leave by mutual agreement or qualify for ill-health retirement.

An ongoing review of the procedure by RACSC has highlighted overlaps with the Clergy Discipline Measure, options for addressing pastoral breakdown, and bullying. Stakeholders, including the Archdeacons' Forum, C of E Retired Clergy Association, and C of E Clergy Advocates are being consulted on a programme of work to address all those areas. RACSC will work with the Archbishops' Council to agree a timeline for bringing these strands to Synod.

Ven. Douglas Dettmer (Exeter): May I thank the Bishop for a helpful answer to the question. Given that the Code of Practice to the capability procedure does not exactly say that the objective of the procedure is improvement but that the principal objective of the procedure is improvement, whilst recognising that as a last resort removal from office can be the result, can the Bishop assure us that the review mentioned will include not only the strands particularly highlighted in the answer but also the operation of the capability procedure as a whole, including the way in which it may lead through the process to removal from office?

The Bishop of Portsmouth: Thank you very much for the question. My new colleagues on RACSC and in the staff who support them have been working extensively on a range of issues and considerations relating to this procedure. They continue to work, are grateful for every input, and are looking to move this work forward quickly. Thank you for bringing that important point to our attention. When I chair for the first time the meeting of RACSC I will ensure that that matter is certainly being considered. Thank you.

Mrs Anne Foreman: Thank you, Bishop, for that helpful reply, particularly the clarification of the objective. I wonder, would consideration be given, please, to ensuring that the programme of work that you refer to also addresses the issue of support for those people who implement the procedure rather than just reviewing it?

The Bishop of Portsmouth: Thank you, Mrs Foreman. I will take that point forward as well. Thank you very much.

12. *Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Promoting a Safe Church (safeguarding policy for adults) was published in 2006 and Protecting All God's Children (safeguarding policy for children and young people, 4th edition) in 2010. In light of many recent developments in safeguarding, are there plans for updated guidance for parishes, and what is the proposed timescale for publication?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells (Rt Revd Peter Hancock) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: We are making good progress with updating this guidance and did extensive consultation with dioceses last year. The Church has recently revised and published the practice guidance for "Responding Well to Domestic Abuse" and the "Safeguarding Training & Development Framework". These are in addition to a core suite of five key documents supported by the overarching policy statement on "Promoting a Safer Church" which was published on 15 March. These will replace the previous policies. These will be supplemented by numerous good practice templates and reference documents, including "types of abuse", "the legislative framework" and one central "glossary". This will include draft complaints and whistle-blowing procedures and information-sharing protocols.

Revd Dr Patrick Richmond: Thank you for all you are doing for safeguarding. The Norwich Safeguarding Team are expecting and looking forward to a parish handbook on safeguarding. Are they right to be expecting that? Is there a timescale?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells: Thank you for the question. It gives me the opportunity to talk about three documents that may not have been seen by all members of Synod. They are designed to be approachable and to be attractive. You have asked particularly about support for parishes. Two things. One is that we are working on a safeguarding hub, which will be a go-to place for all safeguarding questions, and also there is to be a parish safeguarding handbook that will bring everything together. If we need change - and we do need change - policies are only as good as our ability to deliver them, and that is what we are working on at the moment. I will get back to you with a more detailed answer about timescales. Progress is moving, I would want to say very encouragingly, towards both of those.

13. *Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Gibb report on the Church's response to the crimes of Bishop Peter Ball is lengthy, complex and has serious implications. The equally important Carlile report on the Bishop Bell Review is expected to be published later this year. Given the importance of transparency and accountability in raising public confidence in our safeguarding culture, will the House seek the co-operation of the Business Committee to ensure that members of Synod may extensively evaluate the Church's responses to these reports by no later than February 2018?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells (Rt Revd Peter Hancock) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Independent Review by Dame Moira Gibb was published on 22 June 2017. It is available on the internet and I encourage all Synod members to read it if they have not already done so. Synod's particular role in safeguarding is to legislate, and further legislation may come to Synod arising from the Gibb Review. Synod would then be able to debate any matter brought before it. Synod last debated safeguarding legislation in 2016. The National Safeguarding Team holds fringe events at practically every Synod. Any Synod member is welcome to come and discuss safeguarding matters with them. The Gibb Report makes clear that the House of Bishops is ultimately accountable for Safeguarding in the Church of England. The House has not met since the publication of the Gibb Report. The Carlile Report is not yet published. Both will be considered at the next full meeting of the House.

Mr Martin Sewell: A supplementary. Can I also say thank you. You have the toughest gig in the Church of England at the moment and you deserve all credit for standing up to it. Thank you for that. I have already told you my question, but I have to read it. The Secretary General tells us that Synod has a role beyond legislating and that we also consider other matters of religious or public interest - see his answer to question 30, paragraph 5. Bishop Peter, the written answer elegantly evades my requested commitment. Did you bring into account that the public will be very interested if, in six

months' time, they learn that we still have nothing substantial to say about safeguarding shortcomings?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells: Thank you, Martin. I also welcome that question because it gives me an opportunity to give General Synod more details.

The first is what are we doing about this? I am meeting with both Archbishops on Saturday evening to discuss this. Synod may not be aware, but on Thursday the Church of England has a National Safeguarding Steering Group which will be receiving not only the thinking that has come through Dame Moira Gibb's Review but beginning to look about how the Church might respond to Lord Carlile's Review, and the question you have asked will be discussed there. The House of Bishops has already agreed an extended session, with an extra day to consider that question. More importantly, I shall be talking to the Business Committee, as the lead Bishop on safeguarding, about just that matter.

Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Durham): Your answer says that the Gibb Report makes clear that the House of Bishops is ultimately accountable for safeguarding. Has the House considered that the Gibb Report seems - it seems to me - to make it clear that the House of Bishops probably should not be ultimately responsible for safeguarding, particularly where the complaint relates to a Bishop? Is there any consideration being given to having another body which could look at those complaints?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells: Consideration is certainly being given to that. I am not sure that I quite agree with the premise that you give us as an introduction to that question. I think I might be right in thinking that you are slightly misinterpreting what Dame Moira Gibb has said.

14. *Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: The Terms of Reference of the Carlile Review provide that: "The Church of England will determine whether the full report can be sufficiently redacted or otherwise anonymised to enable its publication without risking disclosure of the complainant's identity."

So that there may be complete confidence in our transparency, how will it be ensured that those whose original judgements may be criticised are suitably distanced from the redaction of the report, and will Lord Carlile be free (should he so choose) to indicate whether he agrees or disagrees with the redacted format when published?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells (Rt Revd Peter Hancock) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The redaction of the Carlile Review will be undertaken solely by reference to the normal principles, including where appropriate the need to honour assurances of confidentiality and to comply with the Data Protection Act. The redaction will be overseen by the Secretary General to the Archbishops' Council who was not involved in the decisions being evaluated by the Carlile Review. It will of course be

entirely up to Lord Carlile to state whether he agrees or disagrees with the format upon publication.

Mr Martin Sewell: The Carlile Review arose partly because the Church allegedly used victim confidentiality to shield its own self from criticism. The answer that you have given refers to confidentiality assurances having been given in the plural. Is that intended to imply that the complainant to the Bishop Bell case will not be alone in the witness protection programme?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells: By now General Synod is aware that Martin Sewell knows a lot more about the Lord Carlile Review process than I do. It is right that I do not know that level of detail. Where there is an independent review, it is very important that I stand - and others stand - back from it. I am here to help the archbishops and the House of Bishops respond to those reviews. So the answer, Martin, is that I do not know the answer to that very detailed question, but I will get a written reply for you.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): In the light of the answer referring to the redaction of the report being overseen by the Secretary General to the Archbishops' Council, are you able to give Synod a timetable as to when that is going to happen and when the report is to be published, particularly bearing in mind your answer to the last question that it is to be considered at the next full meeting of the House of Bishops?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells: You are talking about the Lord Carlile Review?

Mr David Lamming: Yes.

The Bishop of Bath & Wells: My understanding is that the work of the review itself will be completed by the end of this month. It will then be down to Lord Carlile when he publishes the report. At the meeting on Thursday of the National Safeguarding Steering Group, we will already be giving consideration as to how and when we might consider the report when it is made available to us in order that there may not be any delay once the report is published.

15. *Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor (Derby)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that it is possible to answer every question on the online C0 training incorrectly and still complete the training, how confident can we be that Safeguarding training is making a difference to practice on the ground?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells (Rt Revd Peter Hancock) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The C0 module is intended to be a basic entry-level awareness course rather than a formal assessment and in this regard it is open to all. It is required preparation for training rather than a constituent element of the training required of those holding positions of leadership or responsibility. The module forms part of the House of Bishops' Training & Development Practice Guidance, a revised version of which

was approved in December 2016. The Framework outlines the requirements for safeguarding training to be completed in accordance with the various roles people have within the Church. Certification therefore indicates that an individual has undertaken some steps towards a greater awareness rather than that they have achieved a particular standard, however modest. Those who hold particular roles and responsibilities as church officers are required to undertake further core modules which do have a higher standard of assessment.

Revd Canon Dr Simon Taylor: The 2017 Practice Guidance on Safeguarding Training and Development, which, Bishop Peter, you so helpfully waved earlier, although you neglected to tell us just the outrageous cost of it, states that C0 training is a prerequisite for attending any other core training modules. It is certainly not experienced as an awareness course in parishes and deaneries. Could you please assure the Synod that C0 training will be reviewed in order that the whole of the safeguarding training portfolio will not be undermined?

The Bishop of Bath & Wells: We are going to let the framework for all the training bed in. As you will appreciate, there are a number of modules and levels for training. Dioceses and safeguarding advisers are saying they do not want the framework changed. There will be a review at the end of 2018. We are continuing to monitor the material that we are using in order that we can learn quickly what people are saying to us about the material and we can add to it and adjust it, if appropriate, as it is being delivered.

16. *Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams (Chichester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Is the Chair of the House of Bishops aware of reputable research which shows that people can be helped, through counselling, to deal with unwanted sexual activity because of their desire for fidelity in marriage or the teaching of their faith?

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: As GS 2070B from the Secretary General relating to Jayne Ozanne's Private Member's Motion on the subject suggests, really robust evidence concerning therapies or practices of this kind is elusive and what there is, is often ambiguous. The question itself, rather narrowly, speaks only of "unwanted sexual activity" - not unwanted sexual attraction or feelings - and so the range of reliable evidence is likely to be minimal.

The key point is that when people are vulnerable they must be safeguarded from manipulation or exploitation by anyone with an agenda of their own. People may well seek counselling on the sexual areas of their lives and, as their vulnerability may not be immediately apparent, any counsel they are offered must be in the context of accountability, proper professional standards and best safeguarding practice.

17. *The Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Since clergy ordained in the Church of England may move into ministry in the Scottish Episcopal Church, what assurances can be given to those Church of England clergy who

do and in consequence become available to conduct, or do conduct, the solemnisation of marriages of same sex couples under the authorized rites of the SEC that they will not be barred from returning to ministry within the Church of England in the future?

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops has not considered this matter. But recognising that decisions about such clergy will fall to be taken by individual bishops, the House may wish to invite the Pastoral Advisory Group to consider what advice could be given to bishops about the approach they should take in these circumstances.

18. *Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Can the Chair of the House of Bishops confirm that the Church continues to believe, in accordance with the teaching of the Bible (Genesis 1.27) and Canon B 30, that God created us male and female in his image and that this distinction of gender is part of divine revelation?

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: According to Genesis 1, all human beings are made in the image of God. It would be wrong to think of one group of human beings only - e.g. only men, or only women - as reflecting the divine image. This is the teaching of the Bible and continues to be the belief of the Church of England. Canon B30, read in conjunction with the Book of Common Prayer, expresses the teaching of the Church of England on Holy Matrimony.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams: Is the Chairman of the House of Bishops aware of the Longitudinal Study of Religiously Mediated Change in Sexual Orientation by scholars Professor Stanton L Jones, professor of psychology at Wheaton College, and Mark Yarhouse, clinical psychologist at Regent University, and their conclusion that, at least in some cases, unwanted same-sex attraction and turning away from activity associated with it is susceptible to counselling and therapy?

The Bishop of Willesden: In the various pieces of literature that have been sent to us over the past weeks, I think we are aware of all kinds of studies making all kinds of claims. I think I want to reiterate - we are going to get to a debate on this later on in Synod - that the key point is what is put down in my second paragraph. There are all kinds of claims and counterclaims made from people who take very different views on these matters. The responsible way in which the Christian Church must deal with counselling and helping people is first to allow the person who asks for counselling to be free to request what they want; and, secondly, to provide a context in which they are free from manipulation, exploitation and allowing their vulnerability to be dealt with by people in unseemly ways. Counselling is something which has professional standards attached to it. It is quite possible to offer a range of different sorts of counselling. All we are saying here is that we want to make sure it is evaluated properly. I hope our debate later on in the Synod will be conducive of a certain amount of light rather than heat.

Mrs Andrea Minichiello-Williams: I apologise to the House of Bishops if my question was unclear. In order to try to be clear in putting it, are you able to say in accordance with the teaching of the Bible (Genesis 1) and Canon B 30 that God created us, male and female, in his image and that this distinction of gender is part of Divine Revelation?

The Bishop of Willesden: Yes. The question actually homed in on Genesis 1:27, which is a text which first and foremost is about all human beings being made in the image of God and bearing that. Obviously it also refers to a sense of gender differentiation, and that is picked up in the later texts in Genesis on marriage quoted by Jesus, so gender differentiation is indeed part of what Scripture teaches us.

19. *Dr Angus Goudie (Durham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the light of the recent debates taking place within both the Scottish Episcopal Church and with the Church of Scotland (with whom we signed the Columba Declaration), can we be assured that the House and relevant NCIs of the Church of England will be actively involved in dialogue with these churches to learn from their experience and to consider their research and documentation when working towards the new teaching document on sexuality and marriage?

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops is kept informed of developments in both the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland through regular channels of communication, both formal and informal. In a number of cases there are also regular contacts at staff level. Through such communication, we seek to listen to and learn from one another, particularly on matters of common concern. For instance, the second Grace and Disagreement booklet produced to resource the Shared Conversations in the Church of England included an extract from a report produced by the Theological Forum of the Church of Scotland for the 2014 General Assembly.

20. *Mr Jeremy Harris (Chester)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: In the February 2017 Group of Sessions, General Synod carried a motion which gave “thanks to God for the rich spiritual blessings that the Reformation brought to the Church of England”. Chief among those blessings is the rediscovery of the Bible’s teaching and the authority of the Bible: “Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man”. (Article 6 of the 39 Articles of Religion). What steps will be taken to ensure that, when considering current issues, the teaching of Holy Scripture will be followed?

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The House of Bishops does not consider that new steps are needed to ensure this, but rather continuing attention to the understanding of Scripture and its place in the Church expressed in the historic formularies of the Church of England.

Dr Angus Goudie: Thank you, Bishop, for your clear reply. In view of the last two commitments in the Columba Declaration, which are identifying theological issues that arise from growth towards fuller Communion and working together on social, political and ethical issues that arise from our participation in public life, will there be any publication showing which areas these commitments are being carried out in? Such transparency, I think, would help in nurturing links and also be evidence of Christian unity.

The Bishop of Coventry: I have not been directly involved in the Columba Statement, but I think that is something that I can take back to the House for consideration. Thank you.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): In evaluating the experience of the Scottish Episcopal Church, will the House also have regard to the fact that, in having changed their Canon relating to marriage, they appear to have put themselves in the company of other members of the Communion whose conduct has been sanctioned by the Primates' Meeting and whom the primates have suggested should not be able to take a full part in the life of the Communion? Is the House going to have regard to the negative side of their experience as well as what might be perceived as the positive?

The Bishop of Coventry: I am sure that deep thought will be given to the actions of our brothers and sisters in Scotland all ways round.

21. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Is the House of Bishops aware of evidence that unconscious bias training is ineffective in increasing the representation or advancement of minority groups within organisations, and may even be counterproductive in that regard?

The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The question unfortunately misunderstands the nature and purpose of unconscious bias training.

There has never been any suggestion that this work is designed to increase representation of minority groups. The training addresses the fact that everyone, from whatever social group, is affected in their judgements about others by unconscious factors which can lead to bias. The objective is better and more conscious awareness of one's self, and better and more conscious decision making which will benefit the Church, as it has demonstrably benefited many other organisations.

Miss Prudence Dailey: Given that unconscious bias training is being implemented in the parts of the Church concerned with selection and appointments, does it therefore follow that the House of Bishops regards it as irrelevant whether it actually increases the representation of minority groups so long as participants go away persuaded that they are to use a phrase which the Bishop has been quoted as using, "borderline racist", even if they did not realise it?

The Bishop of Chelmsford: I just think it is important to understand the purpose of unconscious bias training. Perhaps a good way of thinking about it is this. I remember that when I first visited the United States of America, everyone I met told me “Oh, gee, I love your accent”, to which my kind of instinctive British response was: “I don’t have an accent. I speak normally. You’re the ones that have an accent”. That in a nutshell is what unconscious bias training is about. It is about learning that I have an accent. When I learn that I have an accent, it changes the way that I interact with others. Unconscious bias training is not actually aimed at dealing with any one particular issue, because all of us will have unconscious biases about all sorts of things. Certainly in the Diocese of Chelmsford, where not only in our senior team but we are rolling it out throughout the diocese, it has been incredibly beneficial for us to uncover those accents that we have and do not recognise and is already really reaping rewards in all kinds of areas where we long to increase radical Christian inclusion.

The Chair: I always thought you had an accent. You should have just asked me!

The Bishop of Chelmsford: I do; I have got an Essex accent.

22. *Revd Andrew Foreshew-Cain (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Unconscious bias training is being offered in many dioceses at present to help address the possibility of unrecognised bias in appointment procedures, most commonly around gender and race. Are there any plans for the House of Bishops to recommend similar training around sexuality in the selection and appointment of LGBTQIA clergy and lay members to Church appointments and in unconscious attitudes towards the LGBTQIA communities in wider society?

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: The training referred to is about uncovering and addressing unconscious bias in relation to all aspects of being human. It is not tailored exclusively to gender and/or race, and someone who has fully engaged with unconscious bias training will be sensitised to the potential for such bias in many settings and, if they have learned well, will understand how to recognise and resist unconscious bias in their own thinking and in processes in which they take part.

Unconscious bias training is being offered in at least six dioceses to date and has been undertaken by the CNC, the Joint Employment and Common Services Board, the Appointments Committee and the Church House HR team among other bodies. We will continue to offer this training as widely as possible because we believe it is an essential part of growing closer to the mind of Christ in all our dealings with our own members and others.

23. *Dr Angus Goudie (Durham)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Whilst the establishment of the new Pastoral Advisory Group under Bishop Christine is to be welcomed, in view of the lack of confidence expressed by many regarding the make-up

of previous Working Groups, will the House ensure that the new advisory group includes affirming evangelical LGBT members who have direct experience of the pastoral issues concerned with being LGBT in these contexts?

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: It is not possible to include within the group members whose views cover every nuance of every possible stance concerning human sexuality. But the group will consult beyond itself wherever necessary to draw in shades of opinion that would enable it to make better decisions on behalf of the whole Church.

Dr Angus Goudie: Thank you for your answer, Bishop. Whilst I am aware that there cannot be people of all nuances on the Pastoral Group, and what the Archbishop of Canterbury said earlier about additional people but coming with appropriate skills, I am aware that there are groups who feel a lot of pain, and this is a very stressful situation, and to have what are obviously understanding voices, voices who come from their background within the Church, even if that is alongside some of the specialists, I believe that will improve trust. Can we hope that there will be such voices representing different groups, in particular Evangelical and Catholic groups, and maybe people from some of the LGBTI groups who actually have offered support in the process?

The Bishop of Newcastle: Thank you. This is a really important question. Trying to get a good membership for this group has been quite challenging. The Pastoral Advisory Group replaces an earlier group which had just Bishops in it and there is part of the business of the Pastoral Advisory Group that is still reserved to its episcopal members when we are advising another Bishop who asks us about a named case. So once you have a group that you want to be a workable size and you are stuck with five Bishops on it to start with, it is actually really challenging. We have clearly not been able to include a very wide range of people without making an unmanageable size of core group, but I can assure you that as we begin our work I would be very surprised if we do not discover that we will be seeking to consult widely beyond the group and maybe to have a consultant to the group in particular areas where we know that we lack the requisite experience.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Bishop Christine, whilst I hear that, are you aware of how it appears to the LGBTI community to have one member of Living Out, which for them is seen as a relatively small group, and no openly gay lay person who can represent the vast majority of lay people? It is not just about having a nuanced little group; it is about having the vast majority of their voices heard. I think trust in confidence has really been undermined by the way we have dealt with this. I would hope that we can hear assurances that we will not just be listened to but we will be actively included.

The Bishop of Newcastle: Thank you, Jayne. I do appreciate that there has been quite a bit of concern about this, but I do not think I can add anything to my answer to the previous question, which is that we will be consulting outside and beyond the membership

of the group and it may well be, as we begin our work and really understand the issues, I do not see us changing the membership but maybe we will be having a consultant in one or two areas. I am sorry, I know that will be a disappointment to you.

24. *Revd Simon Talbott (Ely)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What guidance does the House offer on the steps to be taken to protect vulnerable LGBTI adults from harmful teaching and/or conversion therapy?

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: GS 2070B from the Secretary General, in response to Ms Ozanne's motion on conversion therapy, helpfully sets out the evidence around conversion therapy and explores the ethical implications in some depth. A key point is that no one should present themselves as a "therapist" without a proper professional structure and safeguards around their practice.

It is not helpful to conflate so-called conversion therapies and the teaching that may take place in a church context as they are distinct categories and defining "harm" in terms of teaching is especially difficult. But the central point is that, where vulnerable people are concerned, any suspicion that their vulnerability is being abused or exploited constitutes grounds for referral to the relevant safeguarding team.

Revd Simon Talbott: Thanks to the Bishop of Newcastle for her response. Can I specifically ask that these matters will be dealt with by the Pastoral Group as they starts to engage with the considerable agenda that it will have?

The Bishop of Newcastle: Sorry. Can you repeat that again?

Revd Simon Talbott: Yes. Can I ask specifically whether the group will be able to address the issue that I raise in my question?

The Bishop of Newcastle: I am sure that it will be one of the things. We will be responding to a variety of questions, and this is clearly one that has concern. I have been very grateful - this gives me a chance to say - for the high number of really thoughtful contributions that I have already received, which again is providing a really good background as we begin to look at the issues that are of deep concern to us all.

Revd Simon Talbott: Thank you.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Bishop Christine, the Gibb Report raises a number of issues not just around teaching but around culture as well. It seems to me that, as well as teaching and conversion therapy, there is the culture of a Church that may be harmful in these contexts. I wonder if the group might just be able to take that into account as well as the specifics of teaching.

The Bishop of Newcastle: Yes. I think it is really important to separate out teaching and conversion therapy because they are two quite different issues. As to culture, I think one of the key tasks of the Pastoral Advisory Group is to look and to be seeing where we can, without in any way thinking we are going to be changing the doctrine of the Church of England or its liturgical practice, but a change of culture and tone in order that we can show Christ's love to all God's sons and daughters, regardless of sexual or gender identity, is key.

25. *Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Does the House know how many dioceses, as a way of demonstrating our commitment to providing a radical and inclusive welcome to LGBTI people, have:

- (a) appointed a nominated person (lay or ordained, paid or unpaid) to be diocesan LGBTI chaplain; or
- (b) a presence at Gay Pride events in their diocese?

26. *Revd Andrew Foreshow-Cain (London)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: It has been good to learn that Chichester Diocese has appointed a Bishop's Liaison Officer for LGBTI communities. In the light of the call from our Archbishops for a 'radical new inclusivity', will the House of Bishops be encouraging all diocesan Bishops to establish similar posts in every diocese in the Church to make real the promise of consultation and engagement with the queer communities within and outside the Church, in the same way that Advisers on Women's Ministry have become the norm across the Church of England?

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: With permission, Chair, I will answer questions 25 and 26 together. The simple answer is that we do not know how many dioceses have taken these steps because the way a diocese offers a welcome to LGBTI+ people is best decided in the light of the local context. Every diocesan bishop has worked with the diocesan participants in the Shared Conversations to listen and learn from their experience and the views of those participants and others will have shaped their strategic thinking.

The House is aware of examples of dioceses which have appointed an LGBTI chaplain and dioceses which have a presence at Gay Pride events, but these steps do not by any means exhaust the ways that dioceses can offer a welcome.

One role of the Pastoral Advisory Group will be to share examples of good practice among dioceses. It will be for individual dioceses to decide how their local context is best served.

Mrs Susannah Leafe (Truro): In the light of the Archbishop's comment in GS Misc. 1158, which we will be discussing tomorrow, about the need to define terms, would it be possible for us to have a working definition of, "Radical Christian inclusivity"?

The Bishop of Newcastle: I think the fourth term of reference of the Pastoral Advisory Group is to explore more fully this whole concept, but it is really important that we do not

just hear the words, “Radical Christian inclusion”, which are important, but, also, we have the next bit of the phrase, which is, “Founded in Scripture, in reason, in tradition, in theology and the Christian faith as the Church of England has received it.” So, we really must not shorthand here. It is that whole concept which was in the Archbishop’s letter.

27. *Revd Simon Talbott (Ely)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: What pastoral guidance will the House of Bishops be offering clergy who may be approached by same sex couples enquiring about marriage in the Scottish Episcopal Church?

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: This question would be a matter for the Pastoral Advisory Group, and not for me as Chair or any particular member of that group, to decide in advance. The point of having the Group is that its members can discuss the best advice in the light of the specific nature of the case at issue.

GS Misc. 1158 sets out the terms of reference of the Group. The question has not yet been put to the Group, and I do not intend to pre-empt its deliberations.

Revd Simon Talbott: Bishop Christine, can I ask you, as representing clergy on the frontline, so to speak, that this particular matter be addressed quite early by the Group? I can speak of my own situation, I have already had one or two enquiries from people that live in our area about what they should do.

The Bishop of Newcastle: Yes, the Group will respond to the questions that are put to it. I am quite sure that this is a very significant question that we will want to look at, if it is put to us. I do not want to pre-empt, obviously, our discussions now but, given that I border Scotland in our diocese, I can see that these things may arise.

Mr Simon Talbott: Yes, I can imagine the bus from Berwick-on-Tweed will be busy.

28. *Canon Jenny Humphreys (Bath & Wells)* asked the Chair of the House of Bishops: Given that less than a third of British adults believe Christian Churches to be welcoming to the LGB community, what plans are there for each diocese to provide on their website a list of LGBTI-affirming churches that are “radically inclusive” so that LGBTI Christians know where they will be welcomed?

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman) replied on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops: This is the kind of action that should probably be decided and designed at diocesan level rather than centrally. For instance, the question of how best to define “radically inclusive” is not straightforward and may best be developed through local discussions which are sensitive to context.

It would be sad if the identification of “LGBTI-friendly” churches implied that a Christian welcome could only be offered by churches which ticked certain boxes in terms of human

sexuality - for instance, LGBTI people are often warmly welcomed in churches where issues of inclusivity are rarely discussed but are simply practised.

That said, the idea of enabling people to identify churches that go out of their way to welcome LGBTI people is not new and the Pastoral Advisory Group will give further thought to whether national advice would be helpful.

Revd James Dudley-Smith (Bath & Wells): Is the Bishop's reply intending to suggest that LGBTI people will not be welcomed in churches or by churches that teach the Church of England's current understanding of sexuality and the doctrine of marriage?

The Bishop of Newcastle: I am sorry if that is how it reads to you. No, it is not what I intend to say. I think that this statistic, that 38% of 16 to 24 year-olds believe that the Church of England is not a welcoming place for LGBTI people, is one of the most serious challenges that we have got to look at and I think is a really serious part of the task that the Pastoral Advisory Group has in terms of showing the love of Christ for all God's children, regardless of sexual identity and gender.

House of Clergy

29. *Revd Tiffer Robinson (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the House of Clergy: How will the House of Clergy be addressing wellbeing for self-supporting ministers, given that there is no provision or guidelines in the current wellbeing proposals for their support, nurturing or spiritual wellbeing?

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark) replied as Chair of the House's Wellbeing Group: The paper from the Group I chaired [GS 2072] does - in para 8 - acknowledge the need to promote the wellbeing of self-supporting ministers, and takes care to note the suggestion of the House of Clergy that there should be more focus on SSMS than had at first been envisaged. This is a good example of the iterative nature of the process, as we seek to highlight as wide a range of issues as we can as they are raised by interested parties. GS 2072 is not the last word on this subject, and I am sure that the Working Party proposed in paragraph 29 will wish to consider the important point you make as it takes this piece of work forward.

I can assure you that I and my colleagues are keen to be made aware of any further omissions that members may have when Synod comes to debate this matter on Sunday afternoon.

Secretary General

30. *Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester)* asked the Secretary General: Please, could the purpose of General Synod be summarised in one paragraph?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: The General Synod is the National Assembly of the Church of England. It has powers in six areas:

To pass Measures which, if approved by resolution of each House of Parliament, receive Royal Assent and thereby become part of the law of England;

1. To legislate by Canon, subject to Royal Licence and Assent;
2. To regulate the Church of England's relations with other churches and to make provisions for matters relating to worship and doctrine;
3. To approve, amend, continue or discontinue liturgies, make provision for matters to which rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer relate and ensure that the forms of service in the BCP are available for use in the Church of England;
4. To consider any other matters of religious or public interest; and,
5. To approve (or reject) each year the budget of the Archbishops' Council.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester): I think there is a serious omission in your list of the functions of Synod. Is not one of our functions to hold those of authority into account? If it is, it ought to be on your list and, if it is not, why are we asking all these questions?

Mr William Nye: I sometimes wonder about the answer to the last bit. I think it is implicit, Mr Sewell, that, in doing all these things, the various other national bodies - for example, the Archbishops' Council, which spends money on behalf of the Church, or the Church Commissioners which brings forward its Annual Report - are held to account by the General Synod. These are the list of the sort of formal things in the National Institutions Measure, but I agree that is a function that the Synod has.

Revd Preb. Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells): In the light of the fact that we are very interested in simplification these days, would the better answer to Canon Battye's question simply be no?

Mr William Nye: We managed to get it down to six subparagraphs.

31. *Revd Canon Lisa Battye (Manchester)* asked the Secretary General: Could arrangements be made for submitted prepared speeches, which have not been aired in debates for reasons of time, to be collected and made available in written form at a subsequent opportunity?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: General Synod records give an account of the actual proceedings and what was said during the session. If arrangements were to be made for submitted prepared speeches to be collected and made available in written form, this would add a new administrative burden to General Synod staff and also change the nature of the report of proceedings.

Revd Charles Read (Norwich): Like others here, I have produced many erudite, witty and insightful speeches that have never been heard in this Synod. Is not the best repository for unwanted speeches or uncalled-for speeches on somebody's blog, perhaps your own

if you have one?

Mr William Nye: I think there are many places on social media where admirably erudite, witty and thoughtful speeches can be placed rather than in the formal record of proceedings; so, yes, I agree.

32. *Mrs Mary Durlacher (Chelmsford)* asked the Secretary General: What progress has been made in taking forward the recommendation of the Church Buildings Review, passed by Synod in November 2015, which proposed the creation of, “A new Church Buildings Commission for England that would replace the Church Buildings Council, its Statutory Advisory Committee and the Church Commissioners’ Church Buildings (Uses and Disposals) Committee”?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: An informal Working Group made up of representatives of the bodies mentioned in the question is being convened. It will be further improved by the attendance of two members of the Mission Theology Advisory Group with a specifically missional brief. This Group will model joint working, directing central resources to parishes close to ‘tipping points’, for example major churches looking to grow, or churches with small congregations, or in need of major repairs. The Group will offer strategic support for mixed and extended uses, buildings-based diocesan ministry planning, and will inform the work of the statutory committees mentioned. In time, this informal Group will demonstrate how a joint commission can be set up in a way that is of most benefit to parishes.

The Group meets for the first time in September.

33. *Very Revd Tim Barker (Channel Islands)* asked the Presidents of the Secretary General: When is the Secretary General proposing to issue advice to clergy and parochial church councils about the implications for them of the General Data Protection Regulation, which comes into effect on 25 May 2018?

And what immediate advice does the Secretary General have for clergy and parochial church councils, including those working in the Crown Dependencies and the Diocese in Europe?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: The Archbishops’ Council published guidance for parishes and their clergy following the introduction of the 1998 Data Protection Act and are intending to produce updated guidance for the new GDPR this autumn, prior to its provisions taking effect in May 2018. Staff have already met with diocesan secretaries and chief executives to discuss how best the Church should prepare for the new legislation which will require us to work together to ensure a comprehensive and consistent approach.

Staff from Church House have already met representatives from the Diocese in Europe to discuss their particular issues and need for advice. We are happy to do so with representatives from the Crown Dependencies.

34. *Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TElS)* asked the Secretary General: Given the welcome emphasis in *'Next Steps on Human Sexuality'* (GS Misc. 1158) that, "Whatever we say here relates directly to fellow human beings, their experiences and their sense of identity" (para 2); and yet aware of the repeated insistence only six months ago in the House of Bishops' report (GS 2055), "That marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong" (para 8); the House's reaffirmation that, "Our current doctrine of marriage [is that it is] ... between one man and one woman, faithfully, for life" (para 4); and that clergy and bishops must be especially "exemplary" in this regard; in order to provide a broader context for the work of the Pastoral Advisory Group, the themed groups for the Teaching Document, and this Synod's discussions on human sexuality, may Synod have the following information which was requested in the February meeting of Synod:

1. An estimate of the number of remarriages after divorce conducted in Church under the Advice by the House of Bishops issued in 2002;
2. The number of faculties issued under Canon C4.5 for the ordination or consecration of individuals who, being married, have a former spouse or spouses, still living or are married to someone with a former spouse or spouses still living;
3. And, finally, taking seriously GS 2055's emphasis on the 'exemplary' standards required of clergy and bishops, an estimate of the number of clergy and bishops who have divorced and remarried after ordination or consecration, or after ordination or consecration have married someone with a former spouse or spouses still living, at a time when they were lawfully exercising their orders?

Mr William Nye replied as Secretary General: The answers to Dr Maltby's questions are as follows:

1. Statistics on re-marriage in 'religious' weddings are available on the website of the Office for National Statistics at:
<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/asv2htm.aspx>.
The ONS does not break down 'religious' ceremonies by denomination. If required, we can make further enquiries to the ONS to see if they can provide statistics on remarriage in Church of England services over this period.
2. Canon C4 faculties are granted by the Archbishops. Lambeth Palace and Bishopthorpe have figures dating back to 1991 and 1993 respectively. These figures are being collated and will be published shortly.
3. We do not collect this information centrally within the National Church Institutions. The Archbishops and diocesan bishops' offices are most likely to hold this information, and it is at the discretion of each bishop whether he or she wishes to provide these numbers in an aggregated form.

Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby: Thank you for your answer. I know that gathering this

kind of statistical material is very difficult but, given the task before us to discuss marriage, might we have in February a paper laying out the statistical evidence insofar as we can get it about remarriage and Church and ordination after divorce and the other things listed?

Mr William Nye: Thank you for your question. As I wrote to you, we are in the process of assembling the material. We are very happy to make it available to members of Synod in whatever is a suitable form. Can I take the opportunity, Mr Chairman, to make a small correction, which is that one of the things that you asked for, Dr Maltby, which is an estimate of the number of clergy and Bishops who have married someone else with a former spouse still living, that is something which I think Bishops' offices would not actually collect and so we may not be able to provide that, but we will do our best.

National Society Council

35. *Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: According to a report in *The Independent* newspaper on 26 June 2017, the Vishnitz Girls School, a private Orthodox Jewish school in North London for girls aged 3 to 8, has reportedly failed its third Ofsted inspection for failing to, "Teach pupils about all the protected characteristics [under the Equalities Act 2010], particularly those relating to gender-reassignment and sexual orientation", Ofsted stating that, "This means that pupils have a limited understanding of the different lifestyles and partnerships that individuals may choose in present-day society." What implications does this have for Church of England primary schools, and what representation has the Council made to the Department for Education (or will it be making) in the light of Ofsted's ruling in this case?

Very Revd Dr Frances Ward (Dean of St Edmundsbury) replied on behalf of the Chair of the National Society Council: In February 2015, the Government placed a duty on schools to prevent extremism and promote British values which include: challenging extremist views; understanding the importance of identifying and challenging discrimination; and the acceptance of individual liberty and mutual respect. Ofsted Inspections make judgements based on how well a school promotes all forms of equality and fosters greater understanding of and respect for people of all faiths (and those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics).

Our vision for education promotes dignity and respect. We are updating our resource on the prevention of homophobic bullying to reflect this positive vision as well as the new duty. The government is committed to working with the church as new statutory Relationships and Sex Education is developed to ensure that it can be delivered in an age appropriate way within the context of church schools.

Mr David Lamming: I thank the Dean for her answer, but I fear that it does not actually answer the question, which was what implications does the decision to fail the Vishnitz

School of 3 to 8 year-old girls have for Church of England primary schools, and what representations has the Council made or will the Council be making in the light of Ofsted's ruling in this case? Is it not the case that there is considerable concern at the secular agenda of many Ofsted inspectors and there is a particular concern, therefore, for the implications of that for Church of England schools?

Very Revd Dr Frances Ward: Thank you, Mr Lamming. I am deputising for the Bishop of Ely who is on sabbatical. I think it is really important not to be responding with the particularities of one Ofsted report that is reported, as you have indicated in your question, in a newspaper article. It is very difficult to extrapolate from that particular circumstance. I do want to reassure Synod, and you, that the National Society works extremely closely with the Department for Education on all matters concerning the way in which children are equipped in today's world for the complexities around sexuality and so I think that is what can be said in response.

36. *Mrs Sarah Finch (London)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: What representations have been and will be made to HM Government about the reported plan of the Government to require the registration of church youth work, with British values checks carried out by Ofsted, if any one child attends six hours of activities in any one week, thus requiring holiday Bible clubs to register?

Very Revd Dr Frances Ward (Dean of St Edmundsbury) replied on behalf of the Chair of the National Society Council: We have had extensive dialogue with Government, as described in answer to Synod questions in February 2016. There have been no further developments in Government policy on this issue since those discussions but, cognisant of the heightened need to counter the threat and consequences of violent extremism, we will continue to work with Government to ensure that time and resource is not diverted from the real areas of concern by any proposal for blanket registration of out of school settings.

Mrs Sarah Finch: Thank you for your reply. Will the National Society be able to advise the Government that, to have any content, the definition of 'extremism' must include real physical, mental or moral harm judged by infringement of universal human rights, and that Sunday schools and holiday clubs fall outside that definition and so do not require such monitoring?

Very Revd Dr Frances Ward: That is an important point that the National Society will take seriously.

Mrs Sarah Finch: Thank you.

37. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the National Society Council: How extensive is the inclusion of financial education within Church of England schools, and what steps are being taken within our secondary schools to ensure that students

approaching their 15th birthdays are aware of the Child Trust Funds set up for them, bearing in mind that one in six such accounts are 'Addressee Gone Away' (i.e. that their families have lost contact with the account)?

Very Revd Dr Frances Ward (Dean of St Edmundsbury) replied on behalf of the Chair of the National Society Council: The Education Office works in partnership with *LifeSavers*, a key part of the Archbishop of Canterbury's initiative to tackle irresponsible lending and promote saving, helping children and their families learn about money. This whole school approach to financial education ensures that the learning is integrated into the curriculum and becomes part of the life of the school. For church schools, collective worship materials enable children to explore what it means to be wise, generous, just, and thankful with money, recognising that values are as important as knowledge and skills in shaping our financial behaviours. Whilst *LifeSavers* is focussed on primary schools, financial education is also included as part of the curriculum for maths and citizenship in secondary schools and we will bring the issue of Child Trust Funds to the attention of our secondary schools.

Mr Gavin Oldham: While *LifeSavers* is clearly an excellent scheme, it is clear from the *Just Finance* website that only about 40,000 children will eventually directly benefit when full roll-out is achieved, which could be well over three years hence. Currently, it is only in 150 schools. There are over 50,000 children in Church of England schools in my diocese of Oxford alone, so it looks as if *LifeSavers* is not a scalable solution for the over one million children in Church of England schools. May I have a comprehensive answer to my question, please?

Very Revd Dr Frances Ward: Not from me at this moment, but we are very much mindful that *LifeSavers* is intentionally focused on primary schools and community schools, but the National Society will consider commending *LifeSavers* in secondary schools as well and more comprehensively.

Church Buildings Council

38. *Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: What steps is the Council taking to ensure that church buildings are given special priority in future HLF funding, given their dual role as heritage assets and resources for social and community cohesion, as their role in recent incidents such as the Grenfell Tower fire, Manchester and London has shown?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: The response of churches after recent disasters has opened the eyes of many to the value of having an open, welcoming parish church or cathedral. The Church Buildings Council continues to strenuously resist attempts by the Heritage Lottery Fund to close its dedicated Grants for Places of Worship scheme. Although some assurances have been received that we can expect a similar level of funding to go to churches overall after the

change, we remain concerned that focus on repairs, and the relative simplicity of the dedicated scheme, will be lost. Along with colleagues in the Roman Catholic Church and other faith groups and denominations, we are engaged in active dialogue at both staff and board level. In addition, the Second Church Estates Commissioner is working with parliamentary colleagues on a long-term solution to the issue of funding.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford: Thank you, Sir Tony, for a very full answer. Do we know when we will get a yes or a no and, if we do get a yes, how much it is likely to be?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry: I think all of us feel that there needs to be a secure and sustainable fund for the repair and maintenance of church buildings, but I think on both the Grants for Places of Worship Scheme - which at present is administered by the Heritage Lottery Fund - and the Listed Places of Worship Scheme - administered by the Treasury, on which there are subsequent questions - I think that Dame Caroline Spelman, i.e. the Second Church Estates Commissioner, and I need to find a time, pick a time to go and talk to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport about this to get it resolved. I look to the Second Church Estates Commissioner's wisdom as to when we pick the appropriate moment.

Revd Neil Patterson (Hereford): Given the concern or even dismay in no doubt many parishes about the closure of the dedicated funds, can you recommend any actions, perhaps, for example, extensive letter writing to MPs, that concerned parishioners could take?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry: I am not sure that a great letter writing campaign is necessarily going to help on this. I think one of the things that we have to recognise is that the Heritage Lottery Fund can only distribute the money they receive from the National Lottery. There has been a significant drop in the proceeds they are receiving from the National Lottery and one can, therefore, understand their having to make consequent steps about that. What we want to ensure is that, overall, there is adequate resources for the care and maintenance and repair of churches, part of which might come from the Heritage Lottery Fund, part of which may come from elsewhere - which, again, is part of the work of the Taylor Review. I am not sure that mass letter writing campaigns are necessarily going to help at this stage.

39. *Revd Canon Bob Cooper (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: What progress has there been on the initiative to introduce Festival Churches?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: An Association of Festival Churches was set up by the Church Buildings Council in 2016, to act as a forum for dioceses and parishes. The Association held its first annual general meeting in November, where representatives from several parishes and dioceses including Exeter and Norwich presented their experiences and ideas. Another such

meeting is being planned this autumn to review progress. The Association has looked at practical issues such as insurance and maintenance arrangements. Work is also ongoing on advice on celebrating local festivals as part of mission planning and involving the community in looking after rural churches. This can all be found on the *ChurchCare* website. The relevant amendments to the Canons passed their first reading at the February 2017 Synod, hopefully becoming law in early 2019. In the meantime, churches can experiment with the Festival Church model with permission from their bishop.

Revd Canon Bob Cooper: I am grateful to my colleague on the CBC for his full answer. I just wonder if he would like to take this opportunity to mention to the wider audience that are here and those who will read our illustrious minutes, the excellent *ChurchCare* website and everything that is contained on it because I think that is not just about festival churches but in a wider context.

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry: No, the *ChurchCare* website is a fantastic website. If you want to look for resources on Festival Churches, please look on the *ChurchCare* website. If you have in your own churches or parishes interesting festivals that you already organise, please share them with us because we can then share them with others. What we are trying to do here is to seek to keep as many churches open as possible in the country. I think we all understand the concept of Festival Churches, so all ideas, initiatives and suggestions are very welcome.

The Bishop of Willesden (Rt Revd Pete Broadbent): Is the Chair of the Church Buildings Council aware that we received a bit of push-back from various dioceses not to use the terminology of, 'Festival Churches'? This is actually about flexibility for parishes who want to be able to worship in patterns that are appropriate to their circumstance. There is a slight worry that if you put a blanket terminology about Festival Churches across the whole country, some who want to experiment in different ways may not find that conducive to the mission opportunities they want to take. Would the Chair consider making sure that there is a differentiation between the Festival Church model and the wider liberty that the canonical changes will be providing?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry: Yes, look, we just want to help try and keep churches open because seeing large numbers of churches closed does not help with the mission of the Church of England. 'Festival Churches' is just a useful umbrella term of bringing people together but, actually, if different dioceses want to use different names, different titles, Hallelujah, you know, we really do not mind. What we are wanting to do is to try and keep churches open. Different dioceses are certainly approaching this in different ways and there is absolutely no problem with that at all.

40. *Revd Peter Kay (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: What discussions and developments have there been between the Church Buildings Council and the Government concerning the continuation of the Listed Places of Worship (LPOW) scheme?

41. *Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Can the Council confirm that fresh talks are progressing with HM Treasury and DCMS to ensure that the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme, which ended when the last Parliament was dissolved, will now continue for the life of the present Parliament?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: With the Chair's permission, I will answer questions 40 and 41 together. The Second Church Estates Commissioner is working hard with her parliamentary colleagues to see that this uncertainty is resolved. The Secretary of the Church Buildings Council has written to the Secretary of State for DCMS congratulating her on her reappointment, and requesting that the matter of the continuation of LPOW be considered. Additionally, the Secretary is a joint signatory to a similar letter sent with the Roman Catholic Church, Historic Religious Buildings Alliance, and other partners. The request is to continue the scheme until at least 2020, as originally planned, with a period of evaluation built into this timetable to allow us to demonstrate the benefits of the scheme. The creation of LPOW had cross-party support and we have emphasised to Government that we do not consider continuation a controversial matter. We are following this up as a matter of priority.

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford: I am sure Sir Tony would find it helpful for the Synod to know that if we do not make any progress on these issues, the Church will lose close on £24 million, which is more than we spend on all the cathedrals and enough to run three middle-sized dioceses and I am unaware of any source of funding that is going to replace that scale of loss.

The Chair: Is there a question?

Revd Canon Jonathan Alderton-Ford: The question is, when are we going to hear how much we are going to get because we need to know pretty quickly?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry: Well, I refer to the answer I gave just the time before. I think this is one, again, where I say I think the Second Church Estates Commissioner and I need to go and see the Secretary of State and possibly the Chancellor. As I will say, also, in relation to the Taylor Review, having been Second Church Estates Commissioner and having managed to get quite an increase for the Listed Places of Worship Scheme in the last Parliament and having managed to get £100 million for church buildings in the last Parliament, a lot of this is about picking the moment when one goes and talks to the Secretary of State and the Chancellor.

The difficulty at the moment is both the Secretary of State and the Chancellor are slightly preoccupied with other issues. Church buildings are not immediately at the top of their list at the present moment. It is frustrating, but it is very easy for the Treasury or Secretaries of State to say no, so I think we are probably going to have to wait until

sometime later in the autumn. You are just going to, to that extent, have to trust the sagacity and perspicacity of the Second Church Estates Commissioner to pick the right moment to make this approach.

42. *Canon Professor Joyce Hill (Leeds)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: Will the Chair of the Church Buildings Council make a statement on the progress of the *Review on the Sustainability of Parish Churches*, and give an indication of when the Review is likely to be published?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: As Chair of the Church Buildings Council I sit on the panel for this review, which is chaired by Bernard Taylor CBE. The CBC Vice-Chair, Jennie Page, the Bishop of Worcester and Dean of Winchester also represent the Church of England on the panel. Public consultation on this review ran through December and January, and over 5,000 responses were received. This number, coupled with the General Election, has delayed publication. No formal date has been given for publication, but it is likely to be in the autumn on this year. The receipt of so many consultation responses, the majority of which came from those connected with their local church in some way, shows the national strength of feeling on the issues of the long-term survival of the Church of England and its visible representation, our wonderful church buildings.

43. *Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: What consideration been given to restricting the role played by amenity societies, such as the Victorian Society, whose heritage-driven interventions in Faculty applications risk placing unreasonable financial burdens upon poorer parishes and limiting the ability of churches to adapt their buildings for the sake of mission?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: The faculty system replaces listed building consent for church buildings. It has to provide equivalent protection for heritage to secular planning.

The ability of the amenity societies to give comments on proposals for listed buildings and challenge outcomes is part of both church and state planning systems.

Where church planning differs is in the requirement for due regard to be taken to worship and mission in determining an application for faculty.

Advice given by the amenity societies is always tested against this requirement and some amenity societies consider that the Church sometimes uses worship and mission as a pretext to make harmful changes to its buildings.

The Church Buildings Council engages with the amenity societies and seeks to agree on areas of policy when possible to avoid conflicting advice being given. The CBC is

represented on the Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies to engage with and inform them.

Ms Jayne Ozanne: It is not a question on that other topic. Thank you so much for your full response, but my focus of the question really was on the impact on poorer churches and the unreasonable financial burdens that they can be placed under. Could I ask that the Church Buildings Council opens a channel of conversation about this topic with the Simplification Task Group, so that there can be some shared reflection on the relative weight of heritage versus mission in the light of the Renewal and Reform agenda?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry: Absolutely, and I think we have to remember that churches are places of worship and of mission, they are not museums, so we need to make sure that we get the balance right between mission and heritage. I think we may not always have got that balance right and it is something that we need to strive to do.

Ms Jayne Ozanne: Thank you.

44. *Revd Canon Patricia Hawkins (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Church Buildings Council: What steps are the Church Buildings Council taking to help ensure that, when considering proposals for repair, maintenance, or reordering of parish churches, there is an appropriate balance between heritage and the needs of the mission of the Church of England?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Church Buildings Council: The Church Buildings Council is always aware that it must take proper account of the needs of worship and mission when it gives advice on proposals for church buildings.

A church seeking permission for alterations to a building will produce a statement of needs to show how its proposals will enable it to develop its ministry and why it is important to make the changes and to make them now. This document is a key element in gaining permission. The Council will advise churches how to express their needs more clearly to help achieve a permission.

When it is obvious that something of great heritage significance is involved, the Council will work hard to advise on opportunities to achieve the desired mission and ministry outcomes by an alternative route if necessary. Its strong preference is to find a way forward so that the parish ministry can flourish.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): In a recent case that I was involved in, I think the parish felt quite strongly that its needs were subordinated to the heritage requirements. In Southwark Diocese, we are starting to think about a quantifiable process so that the parish can evidence its needs against any opposition. Has any thought been given to rolling that out nationally?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry: Yes. As someone who was a planning minister for four years in a previous incarnation, one of the things I hope that the Church Buildings Commission will do when it is set up is twofold. One is to think about how the Church Buildings Commission can issue what is the equivalent of planning guidance in the national planning system. The second is how will we get a better kilter with amenity societies and others. For example, under our system an individual amenity society can trigger a public inquiry, effectively - as one sees with the Victorian Society in Bath Abbey, for example. There is no equivalent to that in the national planning system and so I hope the Church Buildings Commission, once it is set up, will look at how we get some of these things into a better kilter.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): Given the immense success that the CBC has in terms of managing these buildings, can it give any pointers to those that manage mission in terms of the way in which we might introduce, for example, quinquennials into missional activity?

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry: I think, by and large, the system of quinquennials works pretty well. I think that whole process, actually, works incredibly well for us at the moment. The difficulty is that - and Bath Abbey in your diocese is a very good example - there seem to be a whole number of impediments sometimes towards making progress and I think we need to address those. What is very frustrating for PCCs and for clergy very often is just the length of time that it takes to get things done. What is really important is that our church buildings should be blessings and not burdens.

Council for Christian Unity

45. *Dr Lindsay Newcombe (London)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: *Mission and Ministry in Covenant - Report from the Faith and Order bodies of the Church of England and the Methodist Church* has just been published. How will discussion of its significant proposals be taken forward?

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister) replied as Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: The text of *Mission and Ministry in Covenant* was extensively discussed prior to its release by the Faith and Order Commission, the Council for Christian Unity and the House of Bishops, as well as the relevant ecclesial bodies within the Methodist Church. Now it has been published, we would encourage all members of Synod to read it carefully and familiarise themselves with its proposals, while we hope that there will be opportunities for Anglicans and Methodists to come together in different contexts to discuss its implications and their responses to it. The new network of Covenant Champions, which the Methodist-Anglican Panel for Unity in Mission and the Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group have helped to set up, has a particular contribution to make to this process.

Dr Lindsay Newcombe: How can we find out more about the exciting proposals for ministry in the Methodist Church and the Church of England and who should we speak to

if we have questions?

The Bishop of Peterborough: Lindsay, thank you. Please, Synod members, read the report, which is recently published and which is available. You can talk to any member of the Council for Christian Unity or any of our staff. You can talk to the Bishop of Liverpool or the Bishop of Fulham, who are fully involved in this in different ways. We would love to talk to you and to enthuse you about the proposals.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Does the Bishop plan to approach the Business Committee with a view to the Synod debating this report, either in the near future or at any time in the future?

The Bishop of Peterborough: Yes, we need to go in step with the Methodist Church. That is quite important and that affects the way that we deal with all this sort of thing. Before we bring proposals to General Synod, or seek to do that, we will have to take them to the House of Bishops. The current thinking is that we would like to have public discussion on these issues in both our churches and, within the next year or so, bring the matter to the House of Bishops and then, if the House of Bishops agrees, bring it to General Synod.

Revd Lisa Battye (Manchester): Following on from that, I am actually freshly back from the Methodist Conference last week where this report came out. It is a brilliant report, I think, but I learned at the Conference that 30 years ago the Methodists did a great deal of work on efforts to greater Communion with us, which were then rebuffed by us. I would like your assurance that we get to a point of fulsome welcome of this report before we ask them to do a lot of work and joint work with us.

The Bishop of Peterborough: I agree. That is why we are giving time for the report to be widely read, thought through and discussed at every level. It is why I also think it is important for it to be thoroughly and fulsomely agreed by the House of Bishops before it comes to Synod so that it has the best possible chance of succeeding. It would be terribly, terribly sad if either side, us or the Methodists, said no when the other side wanted to say yes. We are trying to avoid that happening.

46. *Canon Dr Addy Lazz-Onyenobi (Manchester)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: What has been achieved in relation to the Anglican-Methodist Covenant since the final report of the Joint Implementation Commission in 2014?

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister) replied as Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: One of the key recommendations of the final report of the Joint Implementation Commission, which the General Synod voted to accept, was the drawing up of proposals by the faith and order bodies of the two churches that would enable interchangeability of ordained ministries.

These proposals have now been published in *Mission and Ministry in Covenant*, released

on 27 June this year to enable a wider discussion in the Methodist Church and in the Church of England, and to allow consultation with other ecumenical partners. Another recommendation of the final report was to establish the Joint Covenant Advocacy and Monitoring Group (JCAMG) to have an on-going role in supporting the Covenant relationship. Its latest report is available to view on the notice board and provides a concise overview of current developments.

Revd Paul Hutchinson (York): When the final report of the Joint Implementation Commission came to us in 2014, it was delayed in its synodical consideration because we had other very important matters to bring forward and so in the end we came at it after the Methodist Conference by quite a few months. The report that you have already commended to us, Bishop, today, sets out a timetable that they would very much like us to adhere to, which looks towards final consideration at conference and here by the end of our current quinquennium, i.e. 2020. Obviously, your aspiration that the House of Bishops takes it in advance is a good one, but can you give your assurance at the moment that best possible efforts will be made to meet that timetable which is already set out there in the report?

The Bishop of Peterborough: Absolutely.

47. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: Has the Council considered the extent of the provision allowing a clerk in Holy Orders of the Church of England to minister in other denominations (e.g. the Methodist Church), from the point of view of both the Church of England and other denominations?

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister) replied as Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: The Council has been fully supportive of the inclusion within the work on simplification of revision of ecclesiastical legislation pertaining to ecumenical relations, which regulates the matters referred to. This task is now in the Revision Committee stage that will report back to General Synod in due course.

Revd Charles Read: Have the considerations included the scenario where a priest in the Church of England is ordained into the ministry of another church, while hoping to continue in the ministry of the Church of England?

The Bishop of Peterborough: No, we have not yet considered that. I suspect that is way above the pay grade of me or the Council for Christian Unity. That is a matter that would need to be considered by others.

48. *Revd Amanda Fairclough (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: Given the recent decision by the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church to amend its Canon C31 concerning marriage, and with the background that the SEC is not a signatory to the Columba Declaration; what steps are being taken on behalf of the

Church of England to affirm and support its continued communion with the SEC and, indeed, to support the SEC in its continuing membership of the Anglican Communion?

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Donald Allister) replied as Chair of the Council for Christian Unity: The primary responsibility of the Council for Christian Unity is for ecumenical relations, rather than relationships within the Anglican Communion. The Council recognises, however, that there are times when the two may intersect in significant ways. It welcomes the establishing last year of the bilateral process, *Our Common Calling*, between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church, two Churches with which the Church of England has a valued relationship. It supports the regular formal and informal contacts that exist between the Church of England and the Scottish Episcopal Church, and our common commitment as Anglican Churches to the visible unity of Christ's Church.

Revd Amanda Fairclough: I refer to my previously declared interest. I apologise for my naivety in addressing the question to you; I was not sure who it should go to. What I was hoping to discern was the existence, or not, of any substantive plans to support our on-going communion with our brothers and sisters in the SEC and to determine whether or not you know of any plans in place and, if not, perhaps you could point me in the right direction, please?

The Bishop of Peterborough: Amanda, thank you for your question and good wishes for your move to Scotland and your ministry there. There are various groups and bodies which would overlap in their interests on this sort of thing. It has not yet been discussed in the House of Bishops because it is such a new development, the vote that the SEC has had. I do not doubt that it will be discussed in the House of Bishops, but we are talking about relationships between two different churches within the Anglican Communion. It would also, therefore, be very much a matter for the Archbishop of Canterbury and for the Primates' Meeting, as well as for bodies such as the General Synod. I am sure it will be discussed at those levels. I have not yet heard that it is being.

Questions not reached during Synod.

Finance Committee

49. *Mr Keith Cawdron (Liverpool)* asked the Chair of the Archbishops' Council Finance Committee: What grants have so far been approved from the £6m of Strategic Development Funding allocated in 2017-19 for non-diocesan purposes and the £1.3m allocated for research, additional data capacity and the dissemination of learning, as referred to in paragraph 7 of GS Misc 1150?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Finance Committee: To date Strategic Development fund grants of £1.66m have been awarded:

- £1.26m for work to take forward *Setting God's People Free* (see GS 2056), to fund a Director of Renewal & Reform and associated programme support.
- £0.4m for a project to develop a high-quality recruitment support service, to enable dioceses and the NCIs to attract high quality candidates using modern technology.

To date £331,379 has been allocated for research, additional data capacity and the dissemination of learning:

- £150,000 for Diocesan Strategic Learning Communities
- £75,000 for the peer review process
- £62,500 for research into Messy Church
- £29,718 for research into young adults not in church
- £7,920 for a study into sharing learning from Strategic Development Funding
- £6,241 for a Church Mapping Project

MINISTRY COUNCIL

50. *Professor Muriel Robinson (Lincoln)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Given the very pleasing and encouraging news that the numbers coming forward for selection for ordination are increasing, could the Chair of the Ministry Council reassure us about plans to increase the selection staffing in the Formation team, and in particular plans to recruit additional Panel Secretaries and administrative staff to support them?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seely) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: In the light of the immensely welcome and encouraging increase in the number of candidates, I can reassure the Synod that priority will be given to resourcing the selection process, including the necessary additional staff. To meet a further 10% rise in candidate numbers, 49 Bishops' Advisory Panels (BAPs) are planned in 2017-18, an increase of five from 2016-17. We need to manage the high level of demand from March to June and improve on our response to this in 2018. I have therefore asked Ministry Division to increase the BAP provision in the summer and decrease it through the autumn. Further information will be shared with sponsoring Bishops and diocesan staff in September. This will include an improved process for booking candidates and communicating with DDOs to predict demand and to encourage the most efficient use of the BAP places which will be available.

51. *Mr Graham Caskie (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How many ordinands will begin training in September 2017? Please provide a numerical breakdown for the four age bands (under 29, 30-39, 40-55 and over 55) with each age band divided into numbers of men and women.

52. *Mr Graham Caskie* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: How many ordinands will begin training in September 2017? Please provide a numerical breakdown for each diocese, with each diocese divided into numbers on each Training Pathway?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seely) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: With permission, Chair, I will answer Mr Caskie's questions together. The current estimated number of entrants in September 2017 is 543, compared with 476 in 2016. Further detail on the breakdown requested is available on the notice board, with the exception of the training pathway choice for which the information is not available until September. To date only 30% of the notifications of training pathway for those entering this year have been received. I can assure the Synod that I and the Ministry Council will be reviewing all of this information closely when it is fully available in the light of the aspiration for growing vocations and in view of the new Resourcing Ministerial Education funding arrangements.

53. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: Please can the report *Serving Together* be circulated to all Synod members before or on 7 July 2017 or, if not, as soon as possible thereafter, together with any programme of implementation agreed by Ministry Division?

54. *Revd Charles Read (Norwich)* asked the Chair of the Ministry Council: What is the status of the report *Serving Together: The Report of the Lay Ministries Working Group 2015/16* and when will this Synod be given an opportunity to discuss its proposals?

The Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich (Rt Revd Martin Seely) replied as Chair of the Ministry Council: With permission, Chair, I will answer Mr Adrian Greenwood and the Revd Charles Read together. I recognise the need for clarification. *Serving Together* is the report of the Lay Ministries Working Group set up by Ministry Council which received it in November last year and asked for consultation with dioceses during 2017 on its recommendations. It is complementary to *Setting God's People Free* which focuses on discipleship. *Serving Together* focuses on lay ministries. The Report came to the House of Bishops in May and was published on the Ministry Development website in June. A link was included in GS Misc 1170. In line with the February 2016 motion, the Council will report to Synod in July 2018 "on the progress being made by dioceses to secure a step change in both the number and variety of authorised lay ministries". Further information is available at the *Serving Together* display in the Central Hall during these sessions.

REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE

55. *Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: Recognising concerns about funeral affordability for all church workers, both lay and ordained, and the growth in numbers of self-supporting clergy as well as clergy who have not completed full pensionable service, how many dioceses:

- (a) offer full payment for the funeral costs of their stipendiary clergy who die whilst in service;
- (b) offer full payment for the funeral costs of their stipendiary clergy who die after retirement;

- (c) offer full payment for the funeral costs for the spouses and civil partners of stipendiary clergy who die whilst in service;
 - (d) offer full payment for the funeral costs for the spouses and civil partners of stipendiary clergy who die after retirement;
 - (e) offer any support for the funeral costs of lay workers, non- stipendiary clergy, their spouses or civil partners who die whilst in service;
 - (f) offer any support for the funeral costs of lay workers, non-stipendiary clergy, their spouses or civil partners who die after retirement; and
- where dioceses offer support for the payment of funeral costs in any of the above circumstances, how is it funded?

The Bishop of Portsmouth (Rt Revd Christopher Foster) replied as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: The NCIs do not collect such data. Funeral costs, outside of Parochial Fees (which constitute a relatively small part of funeral costs and can be waived), pose a financial challenge for some Church members and those in the communities in which the Church serves.

There will be other financial pressures arising from a death in service and pastoral sensitivity will be the primary approach of dioceses in such circumstances, with discretionary funds being used to support spouses and civil partners of people in all the categories listed. Where there are financial issues the diocese either supports financially or signposts to clergy charities. If the deceased was a member of the CoE Funded Pension Scheme or Church Workers Pension Fund the relevant death benefits would be triggered. For a pension to be payable to a dependant, the dependant would need to meet the relevant definition, as set out in the rules.

56. *Very Revd Tim Barker (Channel Islands)* asked the Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: HMRC is conducting a consultation on the taxation of employee expenses (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/taxation-of-employee-expenses-call-for-evidence/taxation-of-employee-expenses-call-for-evidence>). Will the Committee ensure that appropriate representations are made to HMRC which will aim to ensure (a) that clergy are not disadvantaged in any review of the taxation of expenses and (b) that the taxation arrangements for clergy are not further complicated?

The Bishop of Portsmouth (Rt Revd Christopher Foster) replied as Chair of the Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee: The Government has stated in the consultation document that it has no plans to remove tax relief on employee expenses and seeks to make the current rules clearer and simpler. We fully support the need to ensure that tax rules are fit for purpose in the modern economy given the changes in work practices.

The consultation document has been reviewed by a team of NCIs staff and, following further discussions, the NCIs' Head of Tax has submitted a response on behalf of the

Church of England to ensure that the views of the Church are taken into account by HMRC when considering the matter.

MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

57. *Mr Bill Seddon (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Given that the carbon performance assessment of electric utilities provided by the Transition Pathway Initiative indicates that the better performance of European utility companies is as a result of a more exacting regional benchmark and concluded that global emission targets are insufficiently ambitious, what plans does the Church of England, together with its ecumenical partners, have to encourage more exacting regulatory frameworks in the UK and elsewhere?

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: The Transition Pathway Initiative analysis produced by the LSE's Grantham Research Institute clearly shows the gap between commitments made by Governments at the 2015 Paris climate conference and the higher agreed goal of 2° of warming. A policy and regulatory gap exists between these two pathways. The TPI is highlighting this on a sector-by-sector basis as well as highlighting regional variations. A far greater international, regional and national policy response is needed if we are to achieve a 2° degree world.

The National Investing Bodies are supporting policy engagement with the UK, EU, UN and G20 through the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change. MPA and the Environment Working Group are engaging with ecumenical and other partners to maintain awareness of the Paris goals. The Church is thus combining the leverage of its investment holdings with moral and theological arguments in an approach simultaneously facing outward and inwards.

58. *Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Air quality is becoming an increasingly significant subject for local parishes, especially urban parishes with schools. What plans exist to identify the impact of air pollution on the poorest in our society, and to encourage good practice in parishes in relation to air quality monitoring and improvement?

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: MPA has no plans to attempt a study of this nature. Others are researching questions around air pollution with access to better resources than we have. However, the prime causes of air pollution include the excessive dependence on fossil fuels that is part of the context of the lives of everyone. By focusing on carbon reduction measures, a major work strand of the Environmental Working Group and the focus of its three-year plan, the Church can make a worthwhile contribution to the improvement of air quality. Our efforts to conserve and green urban churchyards also have a part to play in improving air quality. In London over 600 trees are being planted in churchyards and church school grounds.

Trees are of course just one part of the solution and the onus is on all of us to take action for the benefit of current and future generations.

59. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Some years ago thousands of Tesco staff voted for the value “treat others as you would wish to be treated yourself”: remarkably close to “love your neighbour as yourself”. In the recent disasters the whole community has demonstrated their care for others. Yet the ‘ethics’ of corporate UK are still driven by tick-box regulation, and business leaders do not know how to cope with faith and its message of love for others in their structures.

What steps are being taken to engage meaningfully with business leaders, contractors and financiers in order to encourage them to recognise that the calling of care for others is deeply in our human DNA and to encourage their acceptance of its origins in faith?

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Corporate culture is not so monochrome, or quite as oblivious to the common good, as suggested.

The Church cannot reverse cultural changes alone. But, significantly, a “Big Data” company recently approached MPA for help exploring the ethics of their industry and finding ways of using data philanthropically.

Following the Archbishop of Canterbury’s comments on pay day lending, we were almost overwhelmed with offers of help from leading figures in the financial sector. Several worked with us to set up the Just Finance Foundation, including negotiating considerable financial support. And there is the important work of the EIAG engaging with companies to develop ethical practices and awareness.

Not everything in the corporate garden is rosy, but there are many points of effective contact with the Church, suggesting that some business leaders do see the relevance of faith in motivating care for others, and which give us opportunities to spread that message.

60. *Revd Peter Kay (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: In October 2017 it will be 50 years since the passing of the 1967 Abortion Act, since which over 8 million abortions have taken place in the United Kingdom. Is the Church of England planning any central or national events to mark this sad anniversary?

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: I am not aware of any plans by the Church of England for marking the 50th anniversary of the 1967 Abortion Act.

61. *Canon Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Does the Council have any plans to evaluate the impact of local churches’

work carried out with vulnerable families in their local area, including a comparison with the impact made on similar families by local and central government organisations through the recently-evaluated *Troubled Families* programme?

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied as Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: We have no current plans for initiating work of this nature. The work of local churches in this area is diverse and deeply contextual. It is not part of a defined programme with centrally determined parameters.

Comparisons with governmental programmes are therefore elusive and defining which areas of the Church's work are to be counted as having an impact on vulnerable families is not obvious. There is the further point that the resources needed to gather this kind of information and evaluate it properly would be considerable.

That said, MPA is in the early stages of discussion with a university department which is seeking research funding to look at the, related but more manageable, area of how churches promote virtue in hard-pressed local communities. If the university's bid for funds is successful, MPA may be a partner in the project.

62. *Mrs Helen Lamb (Ely)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: Noting the often divisive tone of our public political discourse, and in light of their responsibility to all the souls entrusted to their care irrespective of political allegiance, and in view of the primacy of Jesus' call to make disciples of him not of political philosophies, what constraint is advised or required of clergy in the public expression of political views in a party political or expressly partisan way, particularly, but not exclusively, during an election season?

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith) replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: It is one of the fundamental freedoms of the clergy that they should not be constrained by either their bishops or their parishioners in expressing publicly the political implications of the gospel as they see them. The Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy sets the following boundaries:

It is appropriate for the clergy to play a positive part in civic society and politics, promoting the kingdom values of justice, integrity and peace in public life, calling attention to the needs of the poor and to the godly stewardship of the world's resources.

Ministers must not be members or active supporters of any political party or other organisation whose constitution, policies, objectives, activities or public statements are incompatible with the teaching of the Church of England, as defined by the House of Bishops, in relation to the equality of persons or groups of different races.

63. *Revd Tiffer Robinson (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich)* asked the Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: The 2015 report *Released for Mission: Growing the Rural Church* (GS Misc 1092) makes the recommendation, among others, that "High quality,

specific and locally accessible training and development should be provided through the dioceses for clergy and lay people in multi-church groups to support discipleship, mission, the ministry of lay people, work with schools, children and young people, worship and leadership.” Has there been any attempt from national Church bodies to monitor what progress has been made to this end in the past two years?

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith) replied as Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council: No formal monitoring of this recommendation has taken place, but we are aware that more than half of dioceses have started or are continuing a variety of strategies to supporting mission and growth in rural areas. A review of progress made on this and the other recommendations in *Released for Mission: Growing the Rural Church* will form part of the future work programme of the Rural Affairs Group, starting in Autumn 2017 within the limitations of the resources available.

COMMITTEE FOR MINORITY ETHNIC ANGLICAN CONCERNS

64. *Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham)* asked the Chair of the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns: To what extent has any work been done on the psychological effect of describing a large number of Anglican Christians as “minority” in the various designations of CMEAC, BAME et cetera? In particular, has thought been given to the possibility that labelling people as “minority ethnic” leaves them feeling still more marginalised than before and as to how we might be able truly to celebrate and encourage those who are not white British within Anglican churches?

Ven. Dr John Perumbalath (Chelmsford) replied as Chair of the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns: We understand that for some the description “minority” is problematic as the term comes with associated stigma and stereotype and is a reminder of unequal status.

However, the use of the term “minority ethnic” in the Church has evolved over a long period and has been driven by its M.E. constituency. The previous description and title used in the Church - “black”, and the “Committee for Black Anglican Concerns” respectively - were perceived by some members of the constituency as inaccurate and not fully representative.

Undoubtedly, ethnic self-determination is important to dignity and a sense of belonging. Having a definition of the constituency is also vital for the institution in order to monitor representation. The data analysis gives us some notion of growth and development - and what still needs to be done to ‘truly celebrate and encourage those who are not white British within Anglican churches’

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

65. *Mr Anthony Archer (St Albans)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: What plans exist for requiring members formally to indicate their acceptance of the terms of the General Synod Members' Code of Conduct (GS Misc 1162)?

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Business Committee: GS Misc 1162 is a draft which has been published for comment. All comments and feedback (in written or oral form) will be collated by staff and the Business Committee will consider it at its next meeting. The code in its final form will be published by the Business Committee with the papers for the February 2018 group of sessions. As with the current Code of Conduct, members will be encouraged to comply with the code in its final form, but most of it cannot be enforced, except the section on behaviour towards staff and contractors which relates to current employment legislation. Members who wish to indicate their acceptance of the code once finalised may write directly to the Business Committee if they so wish.

66. *Miss Margaret Parrett (Manchester)* asked the Chair of the Business Committee: In view of the increased use of electronic means for adding signatures to PMMs and the proposals for a move to electronic voting in elections, will the Committee consider introducing a system whereby a response is made on submission of an email indicating the wish to add a signature, or of an electronic vote, so that the member making the submission can be assured that the signature/vote has been received by the relevant office?

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford) replied as Chair of the Business Committee: Unfortunately, the technology that supports the Synod PMMs email address does not allow for any kind of automated response to be set up. The Business Committee and Synod staff have been working closely with the communications team in order to find a new way to solve this problem. We are hoping that the solution will form part the current re-development of the Church of England website and that it will be in place within the next 12 months. In the interim, the Business Committee agreed at its May meeting that a list of members that have signed each PMM (both in person and electronically) would be circulated periodically by email to the whole of General Synod so that members can check that their signatures have been received. This new practice will take effect at the end of this group of sessions, once the period for submitting requests electronically to sign PMMs re-opens.

CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION

67. *Mrs Carolyn Graham (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: Is the Crown Nominations Commission given guidance as to the image the Church presents to the nation when the House of Bishops lacks diversity and in particular when no female Diocesan Bishops have been appointed in the past 12 months despite the appointment of several male Diocesan Bishops?

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) replied as Vice-Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: The Archbishop of Canterbury and I provide the Crown Nominations Commission with a statement to help members consider the ministry of a Diocesan Bishop in the wider Church. This statement includes a reminder that the House of Bishops, as a collegial leadership body, needs diverse voices for its own health and flourishing, and indeed that of the wider Church.

68. *Mrs Carolyn Graham (Guildford)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: Recognising the good work of the Appointments Committee in taking training in recognising unconscious bias, are there any plans for the Crown Nominations Commission to be trained in recognising unconscious bias and understanding how it affects discernment and decision making?

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) replied as Vice-Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: The current central members of the Crown Nominations Commission took part in Unconscious Bias training in April 2016, and the Archbishop of Canterbury and I have asked that all diocesan members joining the Commission also receive training. This has taken place for all members of the Commission since October 2016. Unconscious Bias training will also form part of the induction for the newly-elected central members in September.

69. *Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: In the light of the answer given (Q12) to Mrs Alexander in July 2016, when can Synod expect to receive the outcome of the consideration being given to reissuing the Archbishops' Guidelines on the implementation of *Choosing Bishops - The Equality Act 2010 (Revised)* GS Misc 1044)?

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) replied as Vice-Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: The revised guidelines have now been published and are available on the Church of England website.

70. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: What measures can be put in place in the forthcoming CNC elections to ensure that those standing for election cannot become part of the Church of England process for nominating Diocesan Bishops while simultaneously being actively engaged in a leadership role with congregations outside the Church of England which exist without the permission of persons so nominated and outside disciplines of diocesan life by looking to bishops from other Provinces for episcopal oversight?

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu) replied as Vice-Chair of the Crown Nominations Commission: The eligibility for membership of the Crown Nominations Commission is set out in the Standing Orders, and information about the elections has been provided to Synod members. Members are encouraged to read

candidates' election statements as they prayerfully consider how to cast their votes in the forthcoming election.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

71. *Mr Francis Spufford (Ely)* asked the Church Commissioners: Given the excellent investment performance of the last few years, do the Commissioners have a target in mind for the size of the funds under their management, after achieving which it may be possible to begin to assist hard-pressed dioceses with the costs of post-1998 pensions?

Mr Andrew Mackie (ex officio) replied as Third Church Estates Commissioner: The Commissioners only have legal power to fund pension contributions for clergy for whom they are the Responsible Body: bishops, deans, residentiary canons whose stipend they fund, and clergy employed by mission agencies as set out in the Pensions Measure 1997.

Their distribution policy is to deliver a sustainable level of support for the Church having met their obligation for clergy pensions earned from service until the end of 1997. Spending plans are set every three years and the Assets Committee (having regard to independent actuarial advice) decides the level distributions that can be supported. This will depend on a range of factors including asset value, assumptions for future investment returns and the planned rate of increase in distributions.

72. *Canon Janet Perrett (Ely)* asked the Church Commissioners: How much of the increase in the Church Commissioners' funds in 2016 do they consider to be attributable to the result of the Brexit referendum?

Mr Andrew Mackie (ex officio) replied as Third Church Estates Commissioner: I can't say how assets would have performed if the referendum result had been different but the main impact of the Brexit vote was in the currency market as sterling fell sharply against other major currencies. We deliberately had no currency hedges in place ahead of the vote and we benefited from the rise in value of non-sterling assets. If we had fully hedged our non-sterling exposure returns would have been 4.5% - 5% lower.

The result also had some marginally negative impacts, e.g. our UK equities underperformed the UK market given our bias to small and medium-sized businesses. Overall, despite a number of surprising political events, the Assets Committee navigated 2016 well.

73. *Mr Bill Seddon (St Albans)* asked the Church Commissioners: For those that take climate change issues seriously, it was most encouraging that the Resolution put to the Exxon AGM, calling on the company to report on how its business model will be affected by global efforts to limit the average rise in temperature to below 2°C, was carried with a vote of over 62% in favour, despite strong opposition from the Board and management. Given that the Resolution, co-filed by the Church Commissioners and over 30 other faith-

based investors, demonstrated the exceptional convening power of the Church, what other strategies do the Church Commissioners plan to employ to maximise the impact of its shareholdings to accelerate the transition to a low carbon economy?

Mr Andrew Mackie (ex officio) replied as Third Church Estates Commissioner: We were delighted to play a leading role on a Resolution which, in the face of Board opposition, mobilised mainstream shareholders on the issue of climate change.

Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI) based engagement will be the next focus for the Commissioners and the Pensions Board working together on climate change engagement. Our aim will be to encourage companies to align their business plans with the Paris Agreement, taking account of both the Agreement's overarching targets and the emissions reduction pledges submitted by signatories, again collaborating as widely as possible with other investors.

74. *Mr Keith Cawdron (Liverpool)* asked the Church Commissioners: Can the Synod be given further details of the use of the £7.25m of Funding for Mission in New Housing and Other Development Areas allocated to dioceses in 2008-10, as referred to on page 14 of the Church Commissioners' annual report, including what money has yet to be drawn down?

Mr Andrew Mackie (ex officio) replied as Third Church Estates Commissioner: The funding for mission in New Housing and other Development Areas was allocated to 15 dioceses: 14 were allocated £500,000 and one was allocated £200,000. The funding has mainly been used for missionary or outreach posts; infrastructure projects; funding for parish projects; and increasing diocesan capacity to engage with opportunities for mission in new housing areas.

Just under £1m remains of this funding, the majority of which has been earmarked for specific projects.

ETHICAL INVESTMENT ADVISORY GROUP

75. *Mr Chris Gill (Lichfield)* asked the Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group: The Statement of Ethical Investment Policy agreed by the Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group in September 2014 maintains, in Appendix 1, that "The NIBs (National Investing Bodies) do not invest in any company that derives more than 3% of revenues from the production or distribution of pornography ...". Does that mean that the Church of England is content to support those who are actively earning revenue from pornographic material?

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker) replied as Deputy Chair of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group: Pornography is harmful to society and we believe that our 3% threshold would capture any major producer or promoter. The NIBs have a strong

record of engaging with companies in relation to their involvement with pornography, even where this involvement falls below 3%. The Church has led successful efforts with a telecoms company and a broadcaster, and have been pleased to see them cease pornographic business lines.

ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL

76. *Mr Francis Spufford (Ely)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What steps are being taken to limit the Church's pension liability for those clergy who choose to participate in rival 'Anglican' bodies intended to compete directly with the Church of England in the provinces of Canterbury and York?

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Under the Clergy Pension Scheme Rules membership is limited to the clergy who have been ordained in the Church of England or have been ordained in another church whose orders are recognised and accepted by the Church of England and who have obtained written permission from the Archbishops of Canterbury or York under the Overseas and Other Clergy Measure 1967 to officiate within the Church of England or licensed lay workers.

Dioceses will only pay pension contributions for clergy whose stipends they fund. The Secretary General has recently written to all the Mission Agencies asking them to confirm whether their clergy employees meet the pension scheme membership criteria. They have also been asked to confirm that clergy are deployed in parishes or chaplaincies within a diocese or province of the Anglican Communion or are employed in the administration of the mission agency itself.

77. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Please can a report on progress with the Implementation Plan for *Setting God's People Free* [GS 2056] approved by Synod in February 2017 be circulated to all Synod members before or on 7 July 2017 or, if not, presented with the reply to this question?

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: An updated Implementation Plan has been posted on the notice board and copies are available at the Information Desk. The House of Laity will be discussing progress on *Setting God's People Free* when it meets tomorrow evening.

78. *Very Revd Dr Frances Ward (Deans)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: As the Renewal and Reform programme moves forward, seeking to address some of the deep-rooted missional challenges facing the Church of England, in what ways is work to address the fifth mark of mission being integrated into the wider programme?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops Council: We intend that the five marks of mission

underpin and are reflected in all areas of our work. However, Renewal & Reform is not explicitly structured to follow precisely the five marks of mission. We have, though, sought to integrate environmental and other societal challenges into the core work of Renewal & Reform - for example, by giving considerable emphasis to the public square role of the Bishop in the Leadership Programme. It is also a mainstream discipleship issue within and resourced through *Setting God's People Free*.

79. *Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Birmingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In the light of the budget for 2018, what assurance can be given to Synod that the work of the Archbishop's Adviser on Environment, which is engaging with significant and urgent issues that affect the whole Anglican Communion, and specifically addresses the 5th Mark of Mission, will be adequately resourced?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Whilst the Council's budget for staff and consultancy resource on environmental work has been reduced by around 10%, the National Church Institutions' overall investment and engagement in this area is significant. As well as the Archbishops' Council, the National Investing Bodies (NIBs - Church Commissioners, Pensions Board and CCLA) have been increasingly proactive in this area.

A key achievement for the NIBs was the launch of the Transition Pathway Initiative (TPI): a joint initiative with the Environment Agency Pension Fund (www.eapf.org.uk). This initiative, which assesses how companies are preparing for the transition to a low-carbon economy, is supported by an increasing number of asset managers and owners: now with over £3 trillion of assets under management. The funds supporting the TPI, have committed to use the results to inform investment decision-making, engagement with companies, dialogues with fund managers and with policy makers.

80. *Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: How many dioceses have completed the Peer Review process so far and what, if any, common themes are emerging from those reviews?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Thirty-four dioceses have undertaken a peer review.

We examined the first 25 peer review reports looking at the areas of strength affirmed by reviewer panels and the suggestions made by panels for the diocese to consider.

The most common areas of strength cited in peer review reports were: the clarity of the diocese's vision, the growth in fresh expressions of Church, the approach to the 'common good', the close working relationships among senior staff, and progress made in increasing vocations to ordained ministry.

The most common areas that dioceses were encouraged to consider further were: planning, resourcing and communicating work towards achieving their vision; how clergy might best be deployed; additional support for fresh expressions of Church; how mission and growth might flourish in conjunction with Church schools; more work to increase vocations to ordained ministry; and actions to ensure the dioceses' sustainable financial position.

81. *Canon Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: What plans does the Church have to evaluate the Renewal and Reform programme by recording robust baseline data on church attendance and lay service and involvement within the local community?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Robust baseline data across a range of measures will be presented to the annual Joint Meeting of the Archbishops' Council and the Church Commissioners' Board as part of the on-going process of review linked to the release of the Commissioners' funding.

This data is drawn from a number of sources, including the Statistics for Mission returns, and comprises information such as attendance and attendance trends, age profiles, the number of churches, ministers and ordinations, life events (e.g. baptisms and confirmations) and financial giving.

This will be supplemented by the data from the evaluations of Strategic Development Funding and selected research.

We will always be concerned to establish the financial and spiritual sustainability of the initiative.

82. *Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Do the outcome indicators identified for the measuring of the progress of Resource Churches and Fresh Expressions initiatives funded by Strategic Development Funding, include independently collected, robust data on the numbers of previously unchurched people participating?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Initiatives in receipt of Strategic Development Funding are required to undertake independent evaluation at the end of their funding period. To date, few initiatives relating to Fresh Expressions of Church or Resource Churches have reached this stage. Ongoing monitoring of these initiatives is undertaken by staff of the Strategy and Development Unit.

83. *Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: To what degree are the outcome indicators identified for initiatives funded by Strategic

Development Funding co-ordinated so as to enable easier comparisons where appropriate and to facilitate national learning?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: There is a balance to be found between individual, contextual measures which better enable evaluation of an individual project, and common measures which enable facilitation of learning across projects. Strategic Development Funding projects are varied diocesan initiatives and each diocese is encouraged to think about which measure is most appropriate for evaluating the specific project in their specific context.

However, there are measures which are common to a range of projects which are collected on a common basis (e.g. attendance, baptisms, new worshipping communities, vocations to ordained ministry).

84. *Revd Canon Catherine Grylls (Birmingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: Whilst giving thanks for the distribution of historic funds through the Church Commissioners for 'lowest income communities', but also noting that in dioceses with a high proportion of low-income communities and with a small historical property/investment portfolio the challenge of financial sustainability is particularly sharply felt; what attention is being given to discussion in the appropriate fora as to how the costs of mission and ministry across the nation might be more equitably borne, and, in particular, the costs of clergy pensions and of training the welcome - and much prayed for - increased number of new ordinands in training?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: We recognise that some dioceses are facing particular financial challenges and are in dialogue with many to improve our understanding of their situation.

Clergy pension contributions are funded by the relevant Responsible Body: invariably the organisation which meets the stipend and associated costs. I doubt there is scope to change this.

Most pre-ordination training for ministry costs are funded through the apportionment - which has regard to diocesan resources - or are met by dioceses and subsequently pooled through the same formula.

Apportionment increases over the coming years will be driven primarily by the ordinand growth assumption. We will maintain close contact with dioceses to understand their financial challenges and will continue to have conversations with the Commissioners around potential support. All of us recognise that the more we turn round from gentle decline to growth there will be greater strains on finances to be addressed.

85. *Miss Margaret Parrett (Manchester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: In the light of the Archbishop of York's commitment to maintaining strong and

generous international relations through the Anglican Communion, what funding might be available for those wishing to foster such relationships?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio) replied on behalf of the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council: The Archbishops' Council sets aside a substantial sum of money each year to contribute towards the costs of the Anglican Communion Office; this year the amount was £526,000. International relationships within the Anglican Communion are strengthened by on-going links of various kinds, which are generally funded by those involved. The Diocesan Companion Links, for instance, are funded through limited budgets from dioceses, with most project work being funded through fundraising at parish and school levels as well as e.g. Bishop's Lent Appeals. The Mission and Development Agencies working internationally fundraise from their members to provide for project funding. The Church of England's international work represents much sacrificial giving on the part of parishes and dioceses. The Davidson Fund managed through Mission and Public Affairs is open for applications from potential mission partners who are undergoing training through the Partnership for World Mission agencies.

The Chair: The sand has run through the timepiece up here. I know you are sorry. That comes to the end of Questions. We are going to move on to evening worship. I am sorry to say that the Revd Jonathan Beswick, who was meant to be officiating, is stuck on the M1 - who has not been? Justin Brett is going to be leading our worship now. It would be lovely if some of us were able to stay. Thank you.

Revd Justin Brett led the Synod in an act of worship.

**Full Synod: Second Day
Saturday 8 July 2017**

MORNING WORSHIP

THE CHAIR *Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool)* took the Chair at 9.00 am

Revd Dr Jason Roach (London) led the Synod in an act of worship.

The Chair. Thank you very much, Jason, for our morning worship. Before we get to the next item, members of Synod, could we please welcome the young adult observers who are sitting in the non-voting area to my right and your left? Welcome. We do hope that you will enjoy your time with us and learn such a lot. No, I do!

**ITEM 8
PRESENTATION FROM THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS ON THE
PROPOSALS FOR THE PASTORAL ADVISORY GROUP ON HUMAN
SEXUALITY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING DOCUMENT (GS
MISC 1158)**

The Chair. Now we come to Item 8, which is a presentation from the House of Bishops on the proposals for the Pastoral Advisory Group on Human Sexuality and the development of the teaching document (GS Misc 1158). This is a presentation under Standing Order 107. It will be given by the Archbishop of Canterbury and he will be accompanied by the Bishop of Newcastle and the Bishop of Coventry. They will have up to 20 minutes. Then there will be a time for questions and I will explain how I am going to run that after the presentation. Can I invite the Archbishop of Canterbury to present, please?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): Thank you very much. The debate in February was a tough and realistic expression of views. We are not alone in this as the Church of England. Every global Church, the Anglican Communion included, is struggling in the same way. In this, the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we need to remember that then it was the new technology of printing that spread news and views so fast. Today, the new technologies of IT and tools of social media have the same effect of confronting us with difference and accelerating expressions of opinion, often in radicalised ways among series of groups of people who think alike.

February demonstrated the need for a fresh approach, and we heard that very clearly, while at the same time ensuring that there is consistency of advice and guidance, as we continue to walk together, bearing the burden of our differences; the Command of Christ.

At the same time we need to think and act carefully following the pragmatic Anglican method of approaching controversy through Scripture, tradition and reason, with Scripture as our final authority. The Archbishop of York and myself promised to keep General Synod informed in the letter we wrote after February. This presentation, with a lot of time for questions, is an update of what progress has been made. I hope it is as transparent and honest as possible, both about what we hope for and where we have difficulties. I want to stress that this remains a work in progress.

As we know, as you know, in essence, there are two key steps, a Pastoral Advisory Group, chaired by Bishop Christine, and the beginning of work on an episcopal teaching document, an enormous work, chaired by Bishop Christopher. I want to say now how grateful I am to each of them for taking this on and being here now. Thank you very much indeed.

In this presentation I am assuming that everyone has read GS Misc 1158.

The ways in which the topics on the episcopal teaching document have been drawn up have three key assumptions - and this also applies as an underlying understanding in the Pastoral Advisory Group - that every person is created in the image of God and is someone for whom Christ lived, died, rose and ascended. This is not primarily about issues or questions but about people, and people are to be treasured and loved and valued.

The second assumption is that those within the Church of England who are engaged in the debate are all concerned to be faithful to the love, truth, mercy and justice of God and all wish to ensure that the Church is faithful to a Holy God of love, truth, mercy and justice.

The third assumption is that we must seek to act in a way that reduces fear of each other and of the future. Fear of God is a different category.

We come to these processes as a Church with history, not as blank sheets of paper on which to write. As a Church, we aspire to be those who worship God in Jesus Christ, caught up in His beauty and His love, filled with the Spirit, joyful together, and also a Church that witnesses to that beauty and love that witnesses to our own experience of the goodness of Christ. Most of us agree that these aims are central to who and what we are as a Church, while having diverse perspectives and deep disagreements. We come also with an established doctrine of structures of belief and clear boundaries of acceptability, set out in the Declaration of Assent and reflected at the level of the Anglican Communion in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, Scriptures, creeds, historic episcopacy and the dominical sacraments. We come also with a long-established practice of listening through Scripture, read within the life of the Church, with gifts of reason and understanding, of listening to God, of listening to each other, of listening to the Anglican Communion and of listening to the wider Church (for we retain catholicity),

and to those of other faiths, of no faith and to society and science and other sources of knowledge. As Anglicans we should not be afraid of engaging with anyone, and in our best moments that is what we have been like.

Listening means what it says. It is often confused with agreeing. I remember a colleague of mine at Coventry Cathedral listening very carefully to someone who had a very lengthy complaint, which ended with, "You're not listening to me" and he said, "I am listening to you; I am just not agreeing with you". Listening means paying attention. It means showing that in the way we behave we deeply value, treasure and love the person with whom we are engaging.

Fourthly, we come with a tradition of a process of reception. In Church of England terms this is quite recent, probably only since the mid 19th century, in which in listening, and in taking time for profound theological study and reflection, and reflection on the world around us, and engaging with each other again and again, we will find God's path in Jesus Christ for the joy and the fulfilment of all people, that they may find the love of Christ, and for bringing in the Kingdom. We need to remember that across the Communion, picking up traditions within the Church of England, we do not have an authoritarian hierarchical structure. We listen and we go in for a process of reception, and sometimes that leads to an outcome in which we accept things and sometimes not.

We also have to have realistic expectations of what we are able to do. These two processes have certain aims and means. They aim to take a reasonable time for profound thought, by a large number of people, across a wide range of views and, during that time, to provide pastoral guidance to map out clearly, and with deep thought, the areas of agreement and disagreement, without assuming reconciliation. This is not intended to produce a document that is the answer. This is intended to map or to set out clearly where we agree and where we disagree, to help us understand better the issues and the points of conflict. It should be a prayerful process. We cannot overstate the importance of that. The whole process of listening, the whole process of reception, is something that we do with God in prayer, and that we do before the world around us. We do not talk in a bubble; others listen, and what they hear affects the way in which we witness to Jesus Christ and affects the way in which we live our common life.

The Pastoral Advisory Group has, in a sense, the easier description but a very complex and difficult role. It is to advise dioceses on pastoral issues concerning human sexuality so that we can make explicit our commitment to show the love of Christ to all people regardless of sexual or gender identity. In doing that, it is advice. The autonomy of dioceses, the role of senior staff, of Bishops, is preserved, but there is a clear intention of enabling the widespread sharing of good pastoral practice and extensive consultation. But let us not imagine that everybody is going to agree with the advice or always do the same thing in different places. There will be a significant level of untidiness. There always is in the Church of England. The episcopal teaching document picks up the phrase that Bishop Christine quite rightly reminded us of yesterday and that is on the screen and that

is so often well filleted: "... to reflect a radical new Christian inclusion" - that word for some reason seems to escape attention quite regularly - "founded in Scripture, in reason, in tradition, in theology and the Christian faith as the Church of England has received it".

The whole phrase, the whole sentence, clause, whatever it is (I am not much of a grammar person as you can see), the whole description is essential; every word in that matters. The Working Groups, the streams, will be inclusive as far as we are able, especially bearing in mind gender, lay/clergy balance, BAME, disability, and views and stated understandings on the issues being concerned, but always requiring skills and demonstrated expertise in the relevant area of work. That came out in the questions yesterday. The streams are episcopally led because the ultimate responsibility before God for the teaching of the Church, in our understanding of episcopacy, is entrusted to the Bishops who will answer to God for what they do. It aims to produce a very large-scale document, perhaps with a synthesis to be available for study and comment across the Church, in a form suitably digestible and able to come to be discussed in this Synod, probably in early 2020, though on a process this complicated we cannot be pinned down as to time. We are seeking to discern, to explore the mind of Christ.

There are often comparisons made between our debates and our conclusions on the previous matter of disagreement - on women in the episcopate or the ordination of women - and our debates on human sexuality. There are many very, very profound differences, but there is one parallel: that in all the debate and argument we seek the mind of Christ. Please go back to what I said at the beginning about the assumptions that we start both these processes with. The assumption that all those involved, essentially, are of goodwill and are Christians seeking what is best for the whole of humanity in the service of Christ and Christ's call to us to reflect His nature and His being. We seek the mind of Christ and we seek to know what His call is for us, to be able as one Church - albeit with disagreements - faithfully to preach and live the Good News of Jesus Christ. We are called to unity, not as an alternative to truth or instead of truth or undermining truth. That would be absurd. You cannot possibly have true unity in Christ without truth and you cannot possibly have truth without unity in Christ. We are called to unity in the service of mission in the world - this is Jesus' great prayer in John 17 - and in a world where diversity and disagreement is almost invariably badly handled. We are called to preach and live as whole human beings; whole human beings who rejoice in what it is to be fully human in Christ, whole human beings in our sexuality, so that the joy of Christ is seen in our relationships and lives among ourselves, and with society, and that we may speak confidently in the world around us of wholeness, of repentance, of forgiveness, of love and mercy and justice.

I hope that it would be not seen as unduly controversial to suggest that the joy of Christ is not invariably seen in our relationships, but we are called to be a people of joy and love and celebration because of what God has done for us, because of his extraordinary act in reaching out to us, catching us up in his love and bringing us to relationship with Himself. Above all, because of that, we preach Christ: God with us - fully human, fully

God, incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended and giving His spirit to the Church. We are called to do this as a Church of reconciled reconcilers, full of love and joy and peace; growing in God as we think and reflect, as we study and pray, as we relish the love of Christ on which we feast. Thank you.

The Chair. Members of Synod, we have about 40 minutes for questions and this is how I would like to do it. If you would like to ask a question, at the appropriate moment, please stand and I will call you in groups of three. If you can come and stand at the microphones while the first person is asking their question that would be great and then I would invite the Bishops and Archbishop to answer, and we will proceed in that fashion. If you would like to ask a question, please stand.

Revd Canon Rosie Harper (Oxford): Archbishop, you said helpfully that the teaching document is not intended to be the answer. I remember that this was said about *Issues in Human Sexuality*, but it did become quasi doctrinal and it has been used especially unpleasantly to control vocations. In what way will you ensure that this new teaching document will not become doctrine through the back door?

Revd Dr Ian Paul (Nottingham): Your Grace, we are grateful for your clarification and emphasis on the full phrase “radical new Christian inclusion”, rooted in Scripture and those other principles. One of the things some of us have been wrestling with is, given the second half of that sentence or clause, we are trying to understand the content of the phrase “radical new”. After all, I do not know how many here in the chamber are Jewish. I am not and, as a result, that is a sign that all of us are fruit of God’s radical inclusion, and that churches are the place of diversity and inclusion in our nation, so I am interested in what the content of that radical newness is.

Dean of St Paul’s (Very Revd Dr David Ison): At the beginning, Chair, you rightly welcomed the young people as observers here and said they had much to learn, but young people also have much to teach us. In the list of diversities mentioned by the Archbishop, which included gender and BAME, it did not include age. I am wondering what steps the Archbishop will take to make sure that the voices of young people, which are not necessarily conservative or radical, are actually heard in the process by this Synod and by the Church.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): There is a bit of musical chairs here as we compete to see who wants to answer the question. I had my fingers crossed!

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Christopher Cocksworth): Thank you, Rosie Harper, for your question. As the Archbishop said, this is very much a work in progress in terms of how this document and whole process evolves. I think a key element in that, of course, will be the working streams through the co-ordinating group engaging with the rest of the episcopal team, the College of Bishops indeed, and especially the House, to see exactly

what form of teaching document we want. Do we want a teaching document that teaches people to think well or do we want, at the same time, a teaching document that identifies and rejoices in the teaching of the Church? I think that there is a balance to be had there in terms of how the House of Bishops and the College of Bishops more widely wants to use this document, and the resources that it will be bringing to the fore.

Our doctrine is set by our fundamental sources of authority, and the Archbishop has defined those well. The priority, of course, in our sources is given to Scripture. The work here will be engaging with Scripture and engaging with our definitions of doctrine in order to examine those in present conditions, and then to work with the House and the College to see where it wants to place or how it wants to use that work in terms of, "This is the teaching that we teach. This is where we want people to think well and think further".

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman): Thank you to Dr Ian Paul for his question. A brief thought. The fourth term of reference for the Pastoral Advisory Group is indeed to explore together and hear from others what "radical new Christian inclusion, founded in Scripture, in reason, in tradition, in theology, the Christian faith as the Church of England has received it" might mean in the life and mission of the Church. Clearly, the focus of the Pastoral Advisory Group is pastoral action but we cannot divorce, and we will not divorce, pastoral action from theology because it is clear that everything needs to be rooted in our understanding of God and God's purposes for humankind. As you asked that question, Dr Paul, I thought of Dr Paula Gooder, had she been here. Many of you will have benefited from her enthusiasm for 2 Corinthians and heard her say "in Christ; new creation", which is her translation of that. Certainly in my heart that is something of exploring the depth of what that might mean; "deeply rooted in Christ and in Scripture".

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): On the question of age, my apologies to the group to my right, I should have included age as something that we bear in mind. David, thank you for the question. It always includes the proviso that people come with a particular contribution of expertise that they can contribute to the process.

Revd John Dunnett (Chelmsford): Thank you very much, Archbishop, for your introduction and for the enormous work that has already gone in to set up this process. Like one of the previous questioners, I am one who does not like doctrine by the back door. I wonder whether it could be clarified for us whether the intent here is to offer a front door. By that, I mean not just a guide as in some issues, not just a report as in Pilling, but a teaching document more akin to GS 2055 that clarifies and confirms for us what it is that the Church of England preaches and teaches in these important areas. Thank you.

Ms Sarah Tupling: (Deaf Anglicans Together): Good morning. Thank you very much to the Archbishop of Canterbury for his very clear explanation and for the document from the House of Bishops. I just want to ask about the people who will be involved in this

process. You mentioned disabled people. I just want to check whether there have been deaf and disabled people identified to be involved. As one of the other speakers has said what about young people, my question is what about deaf people too?

In the last group of sessions, my colleague spoke about various minority groups, for example BAME groups, and I just want to make sure that suitable consideration has been given to that within the groups that are being constructed. Thank you.

Professor Joyce Hill (Leeds): I have one very simple question: are the Bishops sufficiently aware of the urgency of this issue? The issue is one which is of great importance to the nation, great importance to the relationship between the Church of England and the nation. Though as an academic I am very, very aware indeed of the need to investigate thoroughly, I am very concerned that there is a lot of long grass potentially growing in the programme which is being put before us.

The Chair: And your question?

Professor Joyce Hill (Leeds): So my question was the one I posed at the beginning: are the Bishops sufficiently aware of the urgency of this matter? I would ask that they do not let the long grass grow.

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth): Thank you to John Dunnett for your question. In a sense, my answer is rather similar to the reply to Rosie Harper that to an extent it depends how the House of Bishops and the College of Bishops wants to work with the material and the thinking that we produce. It is, as I say, very much a work in progress. An image in my mind - and I do not know whether I will keep to this image but it is helping me at this point - is the first task of those groups, and this will be a role for the co-ordination group, is to say to the different streams, "We want you to do some mapping", as the Archbishop has said. That begins with setting out some co-ordinates. Where are the views? What are the theological perspectives, the historical perspectives and the social perspectives? Why are they there? What are the deep roots of them? Can we really understand them and can we really understand each other?

Through that co-ordination exercise, setting out the co-ordinates, one begins to see where, as it were, the land masses are and where is the common ground on which we stand and what are the foundations of that. I would hope that would be pretty large. We have deep Trinitarian incarnational understandings of God which give us deep understandings of humanity and the way society works. There is a huge amount, I would hope, of common ground.

No doubt we will find there are some islands, as it were, that are there which look to be a fair way apart. I would hope we would do some thinking about what sort of bridges can be built between those.

Then I think it would be reasonable as we engage together, particularly as the Bishops engage together in this process and engage with our episcopal colleagues, to see what sort of direction we navigate around these land masses and which ones, as it were, can we see belong to the continent, if I can put it that way, of one Church. There are certain boundaries, as the Archbishop has said, which are determined by fundamental Christian positions as articulated in our sources of authority.

Those sorts of questions are going to be faced, but I would hope very much that the Bishops will be able to articulate some really powerful common ground in which we rejoice together, having done some really hard thinking, having interrogated our doctrine in this present situation, and we will also be able to say there are some areas where there is real disagreement and either further thinking is needed to be done or there are some clear decisions which need to be made about certain understandings. Thank you.

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman): Thank you, Sarah, for your question on the really important issue of disability. I think our response here from the House of Bishops is very much rooted - and at the heart of the Pastoral Advisory Group and in the teaching document, because it is a theological statement - in making explicit our commitment to show the love of Christ to all people regardless of sexual gender identity and to go beyond that to all the things by which we have a human tendency to categorise people and judge people without actually taking on board the whole humanity of somebody.

To be quite blunt - this may be a bit provocative - throughout history, or certainly in our recent history in England, if you have not been a well-educated white male, other groups have been seen, in certain respects, as having less authority and credibility in what they say, so women, BAME people, LGBTI people and disabled people have all been seen in some ways as just a bit defective of the norm, the ideal if you like. Our point here is to absolutely acknowledge the wonderful preciousness and authority and credibility and truly representative nature of every human being regardless of all those other factors by which I think as original sin we categorise each other.

On the question of people in the groups, we will be looking at the composition of our groups, but we will be choosing the very best people, as far as we can see it, to contribute to the work. We will not allow issues such as sexual identity, gender identity or disability to stop us seeing the worth of those people. The best academic in the field, for example, in theology may well have a disability. We may not know that when we choose them, we choose them because of who they are; the disability should not define people. We must be very careful - it is back to this unconscious bias thing - that we do not unconsciously write people off in one or other regard because they are not quite like how I see myself. That is a really important question. We need to keep being challenged by it all the time.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): Thank you, Joyce, for the question about are we sufficiently aware, as Bishops, of the need for urgency.

Views on whether we are sufficiently aware will differ across Synod and across the Church. There are many people who think that this should take a lot longer and there are many people who think that we should come to a quick decision now and get it over and done with. I think all of us would like, if there was a magic wand, to be able to wave it and have a solution. There is no magic wand.

If you look at the paper, you will see that the timetable is set out on page 6. We believe very firmly that a timescale of two and a half to three years both does justice to the depth and range of the questions that need to be addressed, which are profound and extraordinarily difficult questions, and to the need to begin to draw some conclusions for the Church - begin.

This clearly will not satisfy everyone, but already to do a document of this size in such a time is a remarkably short period to attempt such a process, which is why we are working it in a series of concurrent different work streams rather than one group trying to do the whole thing sequentially, which would take far longer.

Are we sufficiently aware? We are aware that there is urgency, but we are also aware that there is a huge importance to sustained and serious theological consideration, including very careful listening to different voices and perspectives, before views are formulated.

Bishop Graham James spoke very eloquently of this in his speech in the February debate looking back at the history on this issue and on other issues. I would refer you to that speech for a masterful presentation of the need for proper reflection and reception.

Revd Canon Dr Dagmar Winter (Newcastle): Regarding the episcopal teaching document, Chair, Dr Jessica Martin wrote a remarkable theological framework, I thought, for the long since forgotten Pilling Report, and I am hoping and wondering, therefore phrasing it as a question, whether this document could be used to inform and inspire the episcopal teaching document and whether she may also be asked to be a contributor. Thank you.

Mrs Hannah Grivell (Derby): Off the back of Rosie's question, would you consider, along with the Ministry Division, advising Diocesan Directors of Ordinands to stop using *Issues in Human Sexuality* in the discernment process of new ordinands until a new teaching document is available, given that it was never intended for use in this way and that it is 26 years old?

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester): Your Grace, one of the greatest areas of difficulty is paradox and when you were answering the question about the young people we threw up another paradox because, quite rightly, this is not going to be an easy question to answer. You said, "Well, we want young people but they have to have proven expertise and something to contribute ..."

The Chair: Your question, please.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester): My question is, if you are young how can you produce that expertise? You do not have 25 years in a parish ministry and 14 books to your name, but the great thing is you have the experience of what it is like to be young which most of us have forgotten.

The Chair: Mr Sewell, can I ask you just simply in a sentence to put your question and stop making a speech.

Mr Martin Sewell (Rochester): How can you resolve that paradox?

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth): Thank you very much to Dagmar Winter. Yes, that was a fine essay by Jessica Martin. There is a whole lot of really good material out there. Although this project does feel pretty daunting, it is hugely exciting. There is some great material to engage with and some great people to engage with. I do not think it is right for me to get drawn into comments about particular names. As the Archbishop has said, we are still forming the groups. There is a real need to get the right balance but also the right expertise. I do not think it would be helpful for me to get into names. Certainly we need to draw really widely and very deeply on the extensive resources out there. Of course, the groups are not bound and the GS Misc document reminds the groups that they are to seek views beyond their own membership, as it were. Thank you.

The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman): Thank you, Hannah, for a typically spot-on question. As a sponsoring Bishop in my diocese, this is one of the questions that I would like to put to our Pastoral Advisory Group, to have a look at the questions that we ask to those coming forward who are exploring vocation. Obviously, in our Pastoral Advisory Group we do not have any authority to change the doctrine of the Church of England, but to look at what kinds of questions we ask consistent with that doctrine I think will be one of the tasks we will need to address with some urgency.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): Thank you, Martin. I was aware of the paradox when I was saying it; it had not escaped me. How do we resolve it? I do not know is probably the most honest answer. As Bishop Christopher just said, we seek views beyond the membership of the groups and bring people in. You often appoint people sometimes for potential as much as for expertise in particular areas, but we will bear the issue in mind. I know it is a paradox.

What is clear, as I think I said in answer to a question yesterday, is there is not going to be a proportionate representation of all possible views, ages, sorts, types, backgrounds within the Church. That is just not possible without having, I do not know, hundreds of

people in each working stream, but we will do our best to be as representative and as inclusive as we are able. Thank you.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): As we begin any major process like this we need to be careful about our terms. Particularly, the term “teaching” is one that will have many different understandings in this room, so a question about pedagogy is quite important at the outset if we are going to know where we are going. I wonder whether it would be helpful to the Bishops and the Church whether we ought to think of a learning and teaching document rather than a teaching document, because education is part of what this process is about as well as telling us the mind of the Bishops.

Revd Paul Hutchinson (York): Last night I asked the Bishop of Peterborough a question about the timescale in the conversations with the Methodist Church and the timescale in those conversations and the work to be done is remarkably similar to the timescale we have on this Report. My question is, is the work we are doing here going to be keeping an eye on the continuing state of deliberations in the Methodist Church and what they are saying? Are we giving any particular priority to Methodist deliberations over and against other ecumenical considerations given the work that we are doing towards recognition of ministries there?

Revd Fr Thomas Seville CR (Religious Communities): I have a question regarding the thematic Working Groups. There may be very good reasons for why this area is absent from them, and I wait for enlightenment on that, but I note that there is nothing dealing with the moral theological aspect of these issues. I look forward to hearing an account of where that area will figure in these deliberations.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): Simon, thank you very much. I suspect that inevitably this process will be one of learning as well as teaching, and hopefully learning for the whole Church and an interactive process that will go on. I bear the point in mind. I just go back to what I said in the presentation that in the end the responsibility for doctrine in an episcopal Church lies within the episcopacy and we have that responsibility, for better or worse.

Paul, in terms of timescale, we were not giving particular thought to the --- Do you know, I should have thought of it and I am grateful to you for pointing it out, I had not noticed the parallel. Thank you very much for pointing that out. I think I made the point about catholicity very carefully, that we will be engaging with a number of other churches not just the Methodist one. We will not be giving particular priority to that, but we will be trying to bear in mind what is going on around the whole Church as we go forward in this. Thank you for that observation.

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth): Thank you to Fr Thomas. Yes, moral theology will be very much part of the work running through the whole process, but it is particularly there in that theological stream. I think the GS document does refer

to dogmatics and ethics as the two particular disciplines to be covered. I can assure you, Father, that will be very much built in particularly to that work but, of course, ethical considerations and moral reasoning will run across them all. Thank you.

The Chair: Members of Synod, I am going to try and squeeze two more questions in. These will be the last two.

Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury): Could I ask what arrangements the House of Bishops is making to consult with and learn from a sister province, the Scottish Episcopal Church, which has recently brought its own deliberations on this matter to a conclusion? I had the privilege of being the Church of England's representative to their General Synod ---

The Chair: Jane, we are running short of time, so just the question.

Revd Canon Jane Charman (Salisbury): I just wanted to say I thought we had much, much to learn from their approach and I would be glad to hear that we are going to consult with them.

Revd Dr Mark Bratton (Coventry): Why is experience not included amongst the sources of authority that you will consider when you are putting this document together? Surely it is the visceral experience of those who have found the Church's inherited position a burden too hard to bear that has impressed this issue on the mind of Synod. It seems to me it is very easy for the Bible, tradition and reason to become algorithms providing slot machine answers to ---

The Chair: I am sorry, that is becoming a speech.

Revd Dr Mark Bratton (Coventry): Why is experience not included as a discrete factor?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): Jane, thank you very much for the question about the Scottish Episcopal Church. We will certainly be seeking to learn from all the provinces of the Anglican Communion and one might also consider Canada, which is in a similar time and place at the moment, New Zealand, Australia, many others that have been considering this question and other provinces that have taken a different view. They will all be learned from. There is a lot to learn from the experience around the Communion in many different areas and we will be seeking to do so very carefully. Thank you for the reminder. Of course, with John Armes here it is particularly appropriate. Thank you.

The Bishop of Coventry (Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth): Thank you to Mark Bratton for your question. I am very glad that Coventry Diocese is taking us into theological method. This is where it gets fun really and this will be work for the groups to do. What

is our theological method? It is certainly not a slot machine. I think my worry with the way you have put it, Mark, is that it sounds like it is just another sort of lever to pull.

How we configure Scripture, tradition and reason is really important. It can sound like a very crude three-legged stool but that was never what it was meant to have been. There is a clear configuration that is necessary in the relationship between those three. As we handle Scripture in the living tradition of the Church with the God-given gifts of reason and understanding, we are always engaging with experience. There is no way of doing theology without engaging with real lived experience.

We can have a discussion about “is it a discrete area?” I do not think it is. It is the air that we breathe. This is where we do our theology. It only has credibility if we are doing it in this situation in human history. This is our missionary environment. This is the situation in which God has placed us to do our theology. It just happens. Thank you.

The Chair: That concludes this item. May I thank on your behalf the Archbishop and the Bishops of Coventry and Newcastle for their presentation and the way in which they have answered the questions. We will now proceed to Item 9.

THE CHAIR *Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham)* took the Chair at 10.15 am

ITEM 9

PRESENCE & ENGAGEMENT: REPORT FROM THE ARCHBISHOPS’ COUNCIL’S MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL (GS 2063)

The Chair: Good morning, everyone. So we come to Item 9 on the Agenda, which is the Report from the Archbishops’ Council’s Mission and Public Affairs Council: Presence and Engagement GS 2063. Members will need that document, which is white in colour. Thank you. What I would like to do now is to give everyone an outline of the shape of the debate. After the Bishop of Huddersfield has moved the motion, I will take the two amendments in order, Items 53 and 54, as they appear on the Second Order Paper. You will see that we are very short of time to do justice to the motion and deal with the two amendments. I am encouraging those of you who wish to speak to exercise some restraint, especially when we come to the amendments, please. In order to assist you in exercising some restraint, there will be a two minute speech limit when we debate the amendments and there will be a three minute speech limit when we debate the main motion. I call upon the Bishop of Huddersfield, Jonathan Gibbs, to move Item 9. He has up to ten minutes. Thank you.

The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs): I beg to move

‘That this Synod, recognising the Church’s continued presence and engagement in parishes, chaplaincies and new missional communities in multi-religious contexts:

- a) commend the national Presence and Engagement (P&E) programme and offer prayerful support for its work over the next five years, requesting that the fruit of this be made available to the whole Church through the P&E Centres and that the programme report back to Synod at the end of this period;
- b) recognise the cultivation of relationships with other faith communities as a vital component of the Church's mission in today's society, and encourage dioceses to incorporate this into their mission plans; and
- c) re-affirm the Synod report "Sharing the Gospel of Salvation" (GS Misc 956) and call on the P&E Task Group to continue supporting parishes in bearing faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with sensitivity and confidence among people of other faiths.

Thank you, Chair. Can I first dispel a myth which has been propagated on the Order Paper? I am not the Vice-Chair of the Mission and Public Affairs Council, I am not even a member of that Council, I am just a jobbing Bishop.

Chair, members of Synod, I am very glad - delighted - to have the opportunity to introduce this debate on the work of Presence and Engagement (hereafter "P&E"). The events of the last few weeks have highlighted the vital importance of this programme, not only for the places where P&E is most focused but right across our nation.

Before I say a little bit more about the Report, let me take you to Halifax. During the week, refugees are helped to learn English and are supported in practical ways, including with the complexities of the asylum system, at the St Augustine's Centre in Halifax. Last Sunday, I was privileged - and by no means for the first time - to confirm 16 Iranians and Iraqis side by side, who are being nurtured in the Christian faith by the church there. This is no isolated phenomenon. Right across the North of England similar things are happening.

Alternatively, come with me to Batley, the constituency of the late Jo Cox MP, where hundreds of Muslims and Christians gathered for Batley's Big Iftar on the weekend of the Great Get Together, a wonderful good news story, which is just a small part of the interfaith cooperation that has grown even stronger in our region since Jo's death.

Up and down this country, as part of the Presence and Engagement programme, Christians are working in their local communities to build relationships with people of other faiths and to stand by them when they are feeling threatened and fearful. These relationships enable Christian leaders both to support other faith communities and, where

necessary, also to say hard things where challenge is needed, something we are seeking to make a priority in our diocese.

This is not just about places where there is significant minority ethnic populations or communities of other faiths. It is also crucially about places where people have little or no experience of others who are different to them, because often that is where fear and prejudice can thrive. One of the aspects of P&E in our area has been the work of Faithful Neighbours, which has included educating Christian leaders and congregations from across our region about people and communities of other faiths and how they can build bridges with them. It can be as simple as putting the kettle on and sitting down to chat together, and that can happen anywhere.

The value of the work of P&E is clearly endorsed by the Government, which provides DCLG funding for the Near Neighbours programme through the Church Urban Fund. It recognises that the Church of England is uniquely well-placed to help deliver this work precisely because we are on the ground in local communities and because Christians there have built up relationships of trust with members of other faith and ethnic communities over many years. Today, we need to recognise that this work and these relationships are more important than ever. In our post-Brexit world, and with the apparent rise in so-called Islamist extremism, we need to recognise the fears and tensions that exist in many of our communities of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds and do all that we can to address these.

You will see that the Report highlights four interrelated priorities for the work of P&E over the next five years. Each of them is important and together they provide a strong foundation for the future.

The first is maintaining a Christian presence in every community. We need to be honest that this is not at all easy in some places. In some of my parishes, 90% of the population are from rural Pakistan and some of our church schools have virtually 100% Muslim children. Some people say “Why don’t you just pull out?”, as indeed many other agencies and organisations have already done, but surely it is all the more vital that we are there to serve and to build relationships with those communities.

The second theme is that of building bridges. Christians need to be leading the way in engaging with people of other faiths, including finding ways of talking about difficult things together. Near Neighbours supports precisely these kinds of initiatives, which come in all shapes and sizes, from those focused on environmental and social issues, to others centred around crafts and music and sports, and plenty which involve giving and receiving hospitality.

The third theme is that of sharing Christian faith, enabling and encouraging Christians to talk about their faith in Christ and to share the Gospel sensitively and confidently with people from other backgrounds. Given the kinds of examples I mentioned earlier,

churches in some of these areas might even have a thing or two to teach churches elsewhere about sharing their faith.

Fourthly, equipping people for ministry. Linking with the theme of Setting God's People Free, P&E longs to see more people, both lay and ordained, getting excited about this kind of ministry and joining in with it. To be honest, and I speak from personal experience, recruiting people into ordained ministry in many of our P&E parishes is not easy, and finding lay people to take on leadership roles there can also be difficult, so we need to grow these ministries locally and to challenge people to respond to God's call to serve in these places.

Finally, Synod, you will have seen that two amendments have been tabled. Following our experience yesterday afternoon, we hope these can be dealt with swiftly so that we may return to the main debate and hear from people about the great work that is happening as part of P&E right across the country.

Presence and Engagement is deeply rooted in the core imperatives of the Christian Gospel: coming alongside others, joyfully demonstrating the love of Christ in our actions, humbly sharing the riches of Christ in our words, and finding ourselves enriched and renewed in our own faith through our conversation with those from other traditions. Today, more than ever, we need to get behind this vital work, whether it is in Halifax or Hastings, Bradford or Bradford on Avon. As the Report says, our work with other faiths is rooted in the Church's identity. It is rightly part of our DNA, fulfilling our calling to be a Church for our whole nation and for everyone in it.

Synod, I am very pleased to commend the Report and the work on presence and engagement to you and to move the motion standing in my name. Thank you.

ITEM 53

The Chair: Thank you. I call upon Susie Leafe to move the amendment standing in her name: Item 53. You have up to five minutes. Anything less would be great, please. Thank you.

Mrs Susannah Leafe (Truro): I beg to move the amendment

In paragraph (c), after "(GS Misc 956), insert "and the theological work on which it is based, "Uniqueness of Christ in Multi-Faith Britain" (GS Misc 905b),"

As you will see, this amendment is very simple and I hope it is uncontroversial. My desire is simply to give Synod the chance to reaffirm the deeper theological work that was done back in 2009 on the uniqueness of Christ in a multi-faith world, known by the snappy title of GS Misc 905B, as well as the work that stemmed from it that we are looking to reaffirm in our motion today. In the past, both documents have been warmly welcomed by Synod.

Both documents are referred to in paragraph 25 of the Report before us, so it seems only right that we affirm both of them at this time.

I am aware that Synod has not been given copies of either document, so let me tell you something of what I am asking you to affirm. GS Misc 905B includes details of the way Scriptures, the Fathers, our Canons and liturgy have all celebrated the uniqueness of Christ. By passing this amendment we will testify as a Synod to the truth that Jesus Christ is unique, not just in a report but on the face of the motion, but, more than that, we will point people to a really helpful resource that could easily get buried in a ZIP file on a server in Church House. In short, in 2009 this Synod amended its motion in order to warmly welcome this Report about the uniqueness of Christ, and I hope that we can do the same.

As we live and work alongside those of other faiths, I think Peter has much to say to us. He tells us to sanctify Christ as Lord and to always be prepared to give an answer for the hope that we have and to do so with gentleness and respect. It is surely the uniqueness of Christ that causes us to want to be present and engaged with people from all walks of life and all faiths. I hope that this amendment will help us to be prepared to give an answer for the hope that we have. If we do not pass this amendment, I fear people will believe that we just want to hide the uniqueness of Christ somewhere in a report, in paragraph 25.

The Chair: Thank you. I invite the Bishop of Huddersfield to comment. You have up to two minutes. Thank you.

The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs): Everyone on this side of the table is utterly committed to the uniqueness of our Lord Jesus Christ and to all that the Gospel brings to the people of our nation. The document concerning the uniqueness of Christ, GS Misc 905B, is referred to in paragraph 25 of the Report. In one sense we have no objection at all to this being included. We have a little bit of concern that, of course, members have not had an opportunity to look at that document. The main thing we do not want to do is take too long on this debate. I think in one sense we want to affirm that there is no resiling from the uniqueness of Christ in this Report. It is clearly affirmed in the Report itself, and paragraph (c) makes it clear that we are very much encouraging people to bear faithful and witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ with sensitivity and confidence.

I think we are happy to leave it to Synod's mind as to whether it wishes to include this amendment or not. Our concern is principally procedural: that members have not had the chance to read that document carefully before we vote on an amendment like this today, bearing in mind that we have a carefully balanced motion in front of us. The panel here is happy to leave it to Synod to decide whether it wishes to support this amendment or not. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Seeing as the Bishop is willing to accept the amendment, I am particularly interested in hearing if there is anyone who wishes to oppose it. The amendment is now open for the debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury): I would ask Synod to resist this amendment. I have called up GS Misc 956. The foreword starts this way: “The Gospel testifies to the uniqueness of Jesus Christ in God’s plan for the salvation of the world. There can be no greater theme...” It seems to me that we need not make reference to an underlying document. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure.

The Chair: Yes, that has my consent. Does that have the consent of Synod?

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

The Chair: That is clearly carried. So we move on to the vote on the amendment. This is Item 53. It is looking very close from where we are sitting. We are going to go through that process again, please.

The amendment

In paragraph (c), after “(GS Misc 956), insert “and the theological work on which it is based, “Uniqueness of Christ in Multi-Faith Britain” (GS Misc 905b),”

was put and declared to be carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That amendment is carried, Item 53. Thank you. Let us move on to the next amendment.

A Speaker: Point of order: can we have a count of the whole Synod?

The Chair: All right. Everyone’s attention then, please. Thank you. We will have a count if there are 25 members standing. Thank you.

The vote on Item 53: Those in favour 153, against 168, with 17 recorded abstentions.

The Chair: Therefore Item 53, Susie Leafe’s amendment, is lost. Thank you.

The amendment was lost on a counted vote of the whole Synod.

ITEM 54

The Chair: I call upon Peter Adams to move the amendment standing in his name: Item 54. You have up to five minutes. Anything less would obviously be great. Thank you.

Canon Peter Adams (St Albans): I beg to move

At the end *insert-*

“(-) noting the importance of relationships between churches and people of other faiths in maintaining community peace and solidarity in many P&E parishes, encourage churches and Christian people throughout the nation to reach out to neighbours and colleagues of other faiths to offer solidarity and friendship in times of tension, condemning the attempts of extremists to divide us, and challenging all hatred.”

Synod, Presence and Engagement has created enormity of context for a re-imagination of what the care of souls looks like in multi-faith Britain. I welcome it. Places like Luton, where I have the immense privilege of living and working, need the sort of wisdom that comes from the programme. Eighty per cent of our parishes have over 10% of other faiths. As a town, we have 25% Muslims.

The spring and summer of 2017 have, though, seen four terror attacks. At a time like this, the enormity of work of P&E needs to be supplemented and extended. My amendment seeks to recognise the importance of the voice of churches and Christian people throughout our nation in reaching out in friendship and support to people of other faiths. I do not want to divert our attention from the P&E agenda. My encouragement is that we all benefit from it, especially in times of national challenge, by learning to confidently and gently reach out as neighbours, colleagues and, dare I say it, friends to people of other faiths. Our solidarity and kind words will be a welcome balm for many. It will also challenge the narratives of inevitable conflict.

For us in Luton, being present and engaged has meant reaching out to our Muslim communities in friendship and solidarity over the last eight years, during which the English Defence League was founded and headquartered in the town for four years. Its leader Stephen Lennon still lives there. Other far right groups have wanted to get the badge of protesting in Luton. Standing alongside our Muslim neighbours, challenging Britain First with their three-foot crosses, as we heard yesterday, getting alongside those who are abused and victims of hatred and bigotry, has the result of making friends. Those friendships, forged by working closely, building trust, have begun to open up a quality of relationships and work together during which we have been able to challenge extremism on both sides, intervene in it, challenge the narratives of the far right and challenge the narratives that seek to separate our nation.

I want to give a voice to a 15-year-old Muslim young woman, writing the day after the Brussels terror attack last year: "Walking through a crowded place, judgmental stares apparent on every face for actions taken in my name. You think that I'm a disgrace. You refuse my hand. You ignore my embrace. What did I do to deserve this hate? I wear a scarf. My dad has a beard. You mock me and you say I'm weird. I fast, I pray, I volunteer, yet still I'm unwelcome here, practising my faith in constant fear. Terrorists deface Islam as they ravage and ruin the common man. This is not my faith. This is not Islam. Don't assume it is. We're about salam. Don't hold me accountable for the insane as all around you'll see the same".

Anna's poem captures the pain and the anger, the frustration sometimes, the alienation of a generation that have grown up with the spotlight of a hostile media on them and in the climate of suspicion, sometimes hatred. In our town they have experienced the voices of hatred on the streets during well over a dozen far right demos. It has deeply impacted their identity.

But let me take you outside of Luton to a wealthy market town just a few miles away and the fear that is there. It is reciprocated. I do understand it. I have not always lived in Luton. I grew up in rural Sussex. My father was 83 when he met his first Muslim. It has changed his world. That is what encountered us.

We are doing all we can to bring these fearful groups together and to encounter. I spoke to the vicar of Bury Park yesterday on the phone. He was introducing Germans, visiting a sleepy little village a few miles away, to a mosque. As I speak, our development worker for The Feast, a brilliant project started in Birmingham, is bringing young Christians from my church and Muslims together to talk about what their faith means and how they can challenge hatred. This is the stuff that P&E encourages, but I hope we can all engage in this as a nation, we desperately need it. I beg to move.

The Chair: Thank you. I invite the Bishop of Huddersfield to comment. You have up to two minutes. Thank you.

The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs): Chair, thank you. First, just to say I think it is very important that we remember that P&E is not just about our engagement with Muslim communities; it is our engagement with people of all faiths. Just that as a proviso to what I am about to say are the issues behind that. I think it is important that we take note of that.

If we refer to Peter's amendment to the text as we have it before us, which does not make particular reference to Islam but is a more generic motion, then I would say that in the light of recent events Peter's amendment as we have it in front of us is timely in reminding us of the need to stand alongside our brothers and sisters of all other faith communities and to speak out against prejudice and hostility wherever it is found. Looking at the amendment on the paper and its more generic nature, I am very happy to support it. I

hope it can be adopted and added to the motion swiftly so that we can return to the main debate. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. So again, seeing as the Bishop is willing to accept the amendment, I am particularly interested in hearing if there is anyone who wishes to oppose it. I see no one standing. I am looking for a motion of closure on the amendment then, please.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure.

The Chair: Thank you, John.

The motion

At the end insert-

"(-) noting the importance of relationships between churches and people of other faiths in maintaining community peace and solidarity in many P&E parishes, encourage churches and Christian people throughout the nation to reach out to neighbours and colleagues of other faiths to offer solidarity and friendship in times of tension, condemning the attempts of extremists to divide us, and challenging all hatred."

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is clearly carried. So we move straight into the voting.

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

The Chair: That is clearly carried. That takes us then to the main motion, as amended, with Item 54 now included. It is open for debate. There is a three minute speech limit. I invite Simon Heathfield to give a maiden speech, followed by Lisa Battye, who is also going to give a maiden speech. Thank you.

Ven. Simon Heathfield (Birmingham): I am glad to welcome this Report and motion with its amendments. Last Saturday in Birmingham we had ordinations. As brand-new priests spilled out of the cathedral, the DDO grabbed me and said, "Let me introduce you to Mohammed." It turns out, Mohammed was just passing by. He wondered what we were doing and we had a lively conversation because his son, it appears, is training as an imam in Leicester. We discussed the formation of faith leaders and he was amazed that we ordained people so very young and for every kind of community, including his own. Our listening and learning even included the merits of Leicester City versus Aston Villa - at least one subject where I knew I was right.

This unlikely ordination conversation reminds me that in a global church in an online world, Presence and Engagement relationships happen everywhere. Al Jazeera is equally available in Small Heath as it is in Surrey. In Birmingham, now officially a super-diverse city, 80 of our 160 parishes are designated P&E, but trends predict that the largest growth by 2030 means my city will then be young, male and Muslim. Other cities will be different, as we have heard.

For us, this is not for the few but for the many - the new norm for almost all of our parishes. This radically challenges what sort of presence we are and what kind of engagement communities need. It questions the very meaning of 'parish' and 'church'. Birmingham Conversations, The Faithful Neighbourhoods, together with the other examples in paragraphs 8 to 10, are pioneering this context, especially amongst women and young people.

As paragraph 14 notes, negotiating change is not easy. Reactions to honest conversations within and beyond each faith community are often conflicted, but P&E's cross-cultural engagement offers much for mission elsewhere. Recent research shows it is much easier to cross-divide ethnicity than class and, given Synod's stated passion to reach out to estates and other areas, listen and learn from Presence and Engagement.

We will require new resources and we welcome DCLG's funding, but in poorer dioceses like Birmingham, with no historic equity and limited resources, Strategic Development Funding is welcome but sustained financial capacity is even better. P&E parishes often embody the Church's vision for all God's people and the Report highlights clergy formation, but this must shape the whole culture of training not just a short course in it.

Paragraph 36 is crucial, challenging our clerical bias. If we are to set all God's people free here, it must be all God's people that are involved. Two years ago, Fox News claimed that Birmingham was a totally Muslim city, a no-go area. Recently, we have a reported 41% rise in religious hate crime between 2015 and 2016. The common good cries out for our engagement.

Jesus knew nothing of no-go areas. Christ's unique person and embodied Gospel was present and engaged in Jerusalem, Samaria and the ends of the Earth - not no-go, but must go. I commend this Report and the motion to the House.

Revd Lisa Battye (Manchester): I commend this Report too from the basis of being in a parish in an Orthodox Jewish area. Presence and Engagement gave me a steer to set up and co-work in interfaith dialogue. It supported me in enabling Kosher receptions and co-leading of civic ceremonies with local rabbis. It has provided money through Near Neighbours for work that we have done to set up a joint Christian/Jewish conversational Hebrew class, which is still going and has led to deep friendships.

We have been able to have seminars which introduced each other to our theologies,

which were called, 'Shared Legacy, Honest Differences'. At the moment, the thinking behind it undergirds work I am doing with the Manchester CCJ on a group of seminars entitled, 'Our Urgent Duty', in which we look at the work of Jules Isaac, a post-Holocaust Jewish writer who is helping us read the New Testament with Jewish eyes and thereby coming to cut at the quick of poor readings of Scripture which lead to anti-Semitism. Presence and Engagement has done a very good work for us in my area. I commend it and I hope it continues and I thank God for it.

Mrs Heather Black (York): "Loving, serving and witnessing to people of all faiths in the name of Christ, and being enriched and renewed in our own faith by doing so." These are the final words of GS 2063 and they resonate so deeply with my own experience of parish life in a poor urban community in Middlesbrough, where we have seen a large influx of people of other faiths in recent years. Middlesbrough is not a Near Neighbours area; however, the town has benefited from some grants through the programme's Common Good Fund recently.

This has supported small social action projects, working across faiths, including projects with children and young people. Our experience has been that families of other faiths have been so delighted that the local church has provided a safe place for their children to come and join in local activities in a place where faith is respected.

This summer, we have children and young people who will be checking in with Trinity Airlines at our parish church and for two weeks they will be travelling to different destinations to learn about their cultures and faiths. This kind of project, which celebrates the new diversity of our community, is part of our Christian hospitality which offers a welcome for all.

Recent weeks have strengthened this growing relationship we have with families of other faiths. I have never had so many hugs from Muslim mothers bringing their children to our youth project. The tragic events of the past few weeks have called us to reach out to each other and find our common humanity. It has been through this loving and serving people of other faiths that we have been renewed in our own faith. As we have loved our neighbours in Christ's name, we have found a renewed confidence in the Gospel.

Just like Stockton Parish Church just up the road, we have welcomed and baptized people who have discovered the love of Christ through simple acts of kindness. Our church has grown in numbers and diversity and we have committed ourselves to nurturing these new Christians, who are now serving in a wide variety of ways in the Church.

Thank you for this Report. My parish church is wholeheartedly committed to growing our relationships with local people of other faiths for the common good and we are committed to faithfully witnessing to Christ with confidence and sensitivity. I trust that Synod will wholeheartedly commend the Presence and Engagement programme outlined in the Report.

The Chair: Yes, point of order, John.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Madam Chairman, after the next speaker could I tempt you with a motion for closure.

The Chair: I would like to hear one more speaker, please, and then that would be great. Thank you.

Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani (Peterborough): I speak personally as an Iranian born Christian who came to this country as a refugee aged 14. I am a second-generation Christian raised in the tiny Anglican community that is the Diocese of Iran. The Church, and, indeed, my family, were hit hard by the Islamic Revolution and in 1980 we found ourselves forced into exile where we have been ever since. Our Church connections and having some family here meant we did not experience the alienation of many asylum seekers.

Nevertheless, 27 years later I am still exploring questions about my identity. I have a terrific desire to belong, to be British and fully integrated within the Church of England and, yet, I continue to be shaped by my Persian roots, the influence of Islam and my ties to the Church in Iran. These things do not always sit comfortably together and it takes time and effort to bring them together. It was with great pleasure that I took part in the recent day organised by P&E that brought together around 85 clergy and lay people facing the joys and challenges of having Persian immigrants and asylum seekers in their congregations. As I have continued to reflect on the day, one of the things that occurs to me is that there is great potential here for strengthening bonds across the Anglican Communion.

Greater knowledge about the Church in Iran and connecting with it more intentionally will give a sense of history and context for those who are seeking to belong here, whilst also providing reassurance that conversion to Christianity does not need to sever them from their Persian roots; that they are linked through the Communion with Christians in Iran; that being Persian and Anglican, wherever you are in the world, ties you through time and space in a shared inheritance embodied in the Anglican Church in Iran; and, for local congregations here, more knowledge of the Diocese of Iran will tie them more closely to a different part of the Communion - if nothing else, through a commitment to pray; and for the persecuted community in Iran, to know they are being prayed for and are part of a bigger family will strength and sustain them.

We must, of course, be sensitive to political complexities and always have in mind the safety of Christians in Iran. Nevertheless, there is rich potential to strengthen familial bonds across the Communion, to develop relations between local churches here and persecuted minorities in other parts of the world through work with refugees and asylum seekers. I commend to Synod and to P&E that this area be explored fully and deliberately.

The Chair: After Bishop Angaelos has spoken, I am looking for a swift motion of closure.

His Grace Bishop Angaelos (Ecumenical Representative): There are many prophets of doom and gloom in this country that will tell us that the Church is weakening and becoming less significant. My experience, however, wearing many hats - besides the obvious - in Churches Together in England, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, the Council of Oriental Orthodox Churches and in working significantly with young people, is that the Church is present and vibrant and active and incredibly necessary.

We see vibrant ministry in response to refugees; migration; poverty; terrorism; the recent Grenfell Tower disaster, in which in I was so glad to see the collars of so many clergymen and, therefore, sent our own Coptic volunteers who do outreach and homeless work to assist. Presence and Engagement is essential if we are to continue to be light and salt, as we are called to, and the overwhelming success of the *Thy Kingdom Come* initiative recently shows what we can do when we are present and working together.

Interreligious engagement is also essential. I come from a Church that has been engaged for centuries as a matter of daily life, and it continues to do so. I feel the pain from both directions. I have seen my own children die in bombings of our churches, and shootings of innocent pilgrims over the past months. I was also in the Palace of Westminster during the attack and, weeks later, stood by the bed of young Andreea Cristea, the young Romanian Orthodox woman who fell from the bridge that terrible day, and I stood with her family as they saw that life slip away as well.

We must also cultivate relationships with the breadth of the Christian Church in this nation and who also come from painful experiences; looking at Acts 1:8, that we look at Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the Earth and not to alienate them for having a different anxiety or a plea to deal with interreligious dialogue differently.

Presence and Engagement is essential and we must work and send a very clear message from this chamber that we are not, and not perceived to be, inwardly focused and exclusive. We cannot let ourselves be perceived to be or thought to be only about issues of sexuality, although that also needs to be addressed. Bonhoeffer says, on morality, that, "The ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world that it leaves for its children."

Surely, the Church is the same. Therefore, I am honoured to be part of the Church in England. I am honoured to be here with the Church of England. We must continue to work together and be present and engaged if we are to be, as we are called to be, light and hope in the world.

The Chair: I need to make an announcement. As we have timed legislation at 11 o'clock, this debate is now adjourned. Hopefully, we will return later this morning. That is where we are at now, everybody. I would like to invite the Chair of the Business Committee,

Sue Booy, to make an announcement.

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): As we have legislative business coming up, which the Chair has reminded us, and we may have to vote, it seems that a significantly large number of people do not have their voting cards with them. If that is you, you may wish to put that right.

The Chair: Thank you. We now move to the next item of business on the Agenda.

THE CHAIR *Dean of Southwark (Very Revd Andrew Nunn)* took the Chair at 11.02 am.

ITEM 500

DRAFT LEGISLATIVE REFORM MEASURE (GS 2027B)

Draft Measure for Final Drafting and Final Approval (Revised at the February 2017 group of sessions)

Report by the Steering Committee (GS 2027Z)

The Chair: The Synod will now take the Final Drafting and Final Approval stages of the Draft Legislative Reform Measure. Members will need the Draft Measure, GS 2027B, and the Report of the Steering Committee, GS 2027Z. I call upon the Bishop of Rochester to move Item 500, that the Synod do take note of this Report. Bishop, you have up to ten minutes to speak.

The Chair: Point of order.

A Speaker: Are we quorate in the House of Bishops?

The Chair: We can see sufficient Bishops for our purposes, thank you.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move
That the Synod do take note of this Report.

I do feel somewhat uncomfortable, actually, interrupting, as it were, the previous debate for this business, but it is the kind of business which Synod is here to deal with and, as you will see, they are not unimportant items in terms of the wider life of the Church. However, if you want to get back to the previous business, you know the quick way to do it. We will see how we go.

We have before us today three items of legislation here which are all Measures which have been dealt with by the same Steering Committee and the same Revision Committee. Therefore, there is a composite Report to Synod from the Steering Committee which has three separate numbers on it and we will find ourselves voting on it three times, just to kind of explain that that will happen.

As far as the Legislative Reform Measure is concerned and its Final Drafting stage, which is Item 500, we have made two drafting amendments to the draft Measure. If you have got the printed copy or you have got it on screen in front of you, they are in dark print to help you identify where they are. Details are found in paragraphs 47 of the Steering Committee's Report.

The first of these amendments relates to clause 4. It is a tidying up, really, about the consultation which might be carried out by the Archbishops' Council before the Measure comes into force and how that consultation relates to the requirement which is now there for consultation documents to be laid before Parliament.

The second drafting amendment adjusts the words at the beginning of clause 6(3), the matters which the Scrutiny Committee must assess are now required to be set out in the Standing Orders of the Synod rather than just appearing in the Measure. Indeed, that is a matter to which the Standing Orders Committee has already given time.

Those are two drafting amendments in relation to the Legislative Reform Measure. We do not propose any special amendments. I, therefore, move that the Synod do take note of the Report, thereby undertaking the Final Drafting stage.

The Chair. Thank you. Item 500 is now open for debate. I see no one standing. I presume you do not want to respond to that then, Bishop?

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I will resist that temptation.

The Chair. Thank you. I therefore put Item 500, that the Synod do take note of this Report, to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod do take note of this Report'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

ITEM 501

The Chair. Thank you. I now call on the Bishop of Rochester to move Item 501, that the Measure entitled Legislative Reform Measure be finally approved. You have got up to another ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move

'That the Measure entitled "Legislative Reform Measure" be finally approved.'

It would be tempting just simply to move straight to the vote but, actually, this Measure is a not insignificant piece of legislation, arising, as you will be aware, out of the whole Simplification process on which we are engaged. Its intention is to provide this Synod with a more rapid and less complex means of amending and repealing items of primary legislation, and much needed it is in the light of some of the complexity of legal framework within which we operate.

The Report of the Revision Committee, which you have seen at previous sessions, included a range of examples where the legislative procedure created by this Measure will enable us to reform law in appropriate ways. I may just, if I may, remind you of a couple of those. We have in our Church legislation provisions for setting up mission initiatives and Bishops' Mission Orders. They are hard to understand because of the form in which they are set out. They involve unduly complex, as some would think, and protracted procedures that can result in financial cost, time and obstacles to efficiency.

The Legislative Reform Measure would enable us, if we so chose, to amend the Mission and Pastoral Measure, replacing the problematic provisions with an improved set without having to go through the protracted procedures that would be involved for amending a Measure.

To take another example, the Patronage (Benefices) Measure of 1986 imposes some convoluted procedural requirements on PCCs, parish secretaries, patrons and others when a vacancy to a benefice is to be filled. Not only are these statutory procedures unduly burdensome to those involved in operating them, they do not actually reflect what goes on on the ground now. Whether we are breaking the law, I am not quite sure, that depends on how archdeacons actually go about it, I suspect.

Without affecting the important rights of patronage and the principles relating to appointments, this Measure would enable us, if we so chose, to rationalise these provisions using the new order-making procedure; or, to use another example, this new procedure will enable us to dispose of provisions which, unhelpfully, hinder the Church in making most effective use of its financial provisions.

For example, we could, again, if we so chose, remove or perhaps modify provisions in the Diocesan Stipends Funds Measure 1953 which require a DBF to allocate to the capital account of the Diocesan Stipends Fund any legacy that is not expressly directed by the testator to be applicable as income. That rule is inconsistent with the modern approach to the use of gifts and can result in financial cost to a diocese which receives a legacy but cannot apply it, as things currently stand, to current stipend costs.

These are simply examples to show the kinds of things which the Measure would enable us to address. They are not just theoretical issues. They are real things which affect the mission and ministry of the Church as we undertake it day by day, week by week across

our nation. The targeting of this Measure, as set out in clause 1, is the removal or reduction of burdens resulting directly or indirectly from ecclesiastical legislation and it is the intention that there should be real benefits from this.

Some people have expressed concerns all through this debate about the safeguards, that we should not be using this order-making provision to do things which would be inappropriate. There have been safeguards built into the Measure all the way through. The Archbishops' Council, for example, must carry out a process of consultation before embarking on a legislative process under this Measure.

As a result of an amendment which was made by the Revision Committee in response to concerns from members of the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament, the first step in that process of consultation will now also involve laying the consultation documents before both Houses of Parliament. Any member of either House will have the opportunity thereby to raise concerns. This is in addition to the power that each House of Parliament would have to annul an Order at a later stage in the process. Of course, every member of the General Synod must also be consulted, as must any other interested parties.

Additionally, before deciding to proceed with a draft Order, the Council will have to be satisfied that a number of conditions are met. These include a condition that the policy objective could not be satisfactorily secured in some non-legislative way. There is also a provision that an Order could not remove necessary protections. Equally, it must not prevent anyone from continuing to exercise a right or freedom which they might otherwise reasonably expect to continue to have, nor receive a financial benefit to which they are entitled.

The Council must also be satisfied that a proposed Order does not contain provision which is of constitutional significance. In other words, there are all sorts of pre-conditions here which must be met and the Council will take a view as to whether they have been met and the Synod itself will be able to take a different view if it so chose. There are key statutes which are excluded from the scope of Orders which may be made under this Measure, particularly those that affect the constitution of this Synod and those which affect the worship and doctrine of the Church of England - indeed, any matter which would constitute Article 7 or Article 8 business would be included.

If the Archbishops' Council, after due consultation, decides to proceed with a draft Order, that draft will be laid before the General Synod. It must be accompanied by an explanatory document which says how the Council has met the various requirements in the Measure, as well as giving details of the consultation and its outcome. A draft Order would then automatically stand referred to a Committee of the Synod to be known as the Scrutiny Committee. That is the one provided for in, I think it is, clause 6 of this Measure.

The Scrutiny Committee would then consider and report on the draft Order. The Committee's Report would have to include an assessment of whether the Order is

properly within the powers conferred by the Measure, whether the consultation has been properly carried out and, also, an assessment of whether it is appropriate for any provision contained in the draft Order to be made by Order rather than the full Measure process.

The Scrutiny Committee will also have the power to make an amendment to the draft Order before reporting on it. Once it receives the Report by the Scrutiny Committee, the Synod would then have options; namely, to approve the draft Order, along with any amendments proposed by the Committee, to reject it, or to refer it back to the Committee for further attention. Because Orders made under the Measure, although not dealing with substantial policy issues, will nevertheless be changing the law of the land, Parliament at the end of the day will have a veto over any Order.

An Order that has been approved by the Synod must be laid before both Houses of Parliament and either House may pass a resolution to annul that Order. You will see there are a whole range of safeguards which, hopefully, will allay any fears which anybody might have. As a final kind of safeguard, in the “Sunset” provision in clause 10, this Measure will automatically expire in five years’ time, or five years after the first draft Order is laid before the General Synod, unless the Measure is continued in force by a special Order approved both by this Synod and by Parliament. There is further reassurance there that if, as it were, it does not work, or if we need to amend the way it works, actually, we will come back to it in five years’ time.

The intention of all of this has been to strike a balance between the need to achieve a greater degree of speed and flexibility in making certain kinds of changes to ecclesiastical legislation and ensuring that the legislative functions of the General Synod and, indeed, of Parliament are properly safeguarded.

I believe that after the revision stage and the amendments that have been made, we have achieved that, and I therefore encourage you to support this Measure at this Final Approval stage. In order to do that, I am pleased to move the motion that stands in my name at Item 501 on your Order Paper.

The Chair. Item 501 is now open for debate. I need to remind members of Synod that under Standing Order 64 motions for the closure, the speech limit or next business are not in order in this debate.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): I am a member of the Legislative Committee. I want to begin by paying tribute to the work of the Ecclesiastical Committee and also the Legislative Committee and the hard work that has been done in properly checking all the Measures as they come forward from here.

As members will be aware, I was nervous about this at the beginning. I have been reassured hearing both what the Bishop of Rochester has said today and in discussions with the Vicar-General and other members of Synod I am pretty confident that the checks

in process now will be properly implemented and used, and that this will not be the order of the day and these will be in exceptional circumstances when these will come forward.

I think the safeguards are the crucial side to it and the fact that members of General Synod will still have the opportunity to raise their concerns, both on the floor and obviously in any lobbying which might be undertaken with the Ecclesiastical Committee and indeed with the Archbishops' Council. I would obviously declare an interest in being interested in the Scrutiny Committee, which will play a very key role, I believe, in ascertaining just how relevant and necessary this particular Measure and, indeed, a particular Order is. I think that will be very much down perhaps to the Legislative Committee and also, I imagine, whoever is chairing a Revision Committee to decide when it becomes a specific Order.

I look at the exceptions under point 3 listing the Submission of the Clergy Act and the Appointment of Bishops Act, and I think that makes clear that there are certain occasions when it will not be required. What I want to be reassured of still, however, is that nothing will be rushed. I have said before, Chair, that the Ecclesiastical Committee have always been incredibly supportive of what we have been asking. They always find time for us and I do not believe we have ever had any legislation unnecessarily delayed. That is why I pay tribute to them. I would urge that we continue to do this working in partnership and that we are confident and we realise that the kind of simplification requirements listed, which have been interpreted in this particular Measure today, will be necessary but will from time to time be actually brought into use. I welcome that. I support it. I wish it well as it continues and I am certain that those safeguards will give it a proper hearing.

Revd Stewart Fyfe (Carlisle): I was privileged to sit on the Revisions Committee for this piece of legislation. What I really want to say is that I hope that it will be used. As the great ice floe of ecclesiastical legislation has moved its slow and inexorable way across the centuries it has left behind a veritable scree slope of small boulders and impediments that now need to be cleared away. Please be bold and imaginative in using these Orders to clear the path.

I would also say particularly to the Archbishops' Council and Business Committee do not forget the sunset clause. Please let us make sure that we do not let this lapse inadvertently. It is a wonderful thing that we are doing to help with Renewal and Reform; please use it.

The Chair: I see no one standing, therefore, I invite the Bishop of Rochester to respond to the debate.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): Thank you particularly to Peter Bruinvels for drawing attention to the important role of the Scrutiny Committee and reminding us of the exceptions which are provided for. You expressed the hope that nothing should be overly rushed. I am not sure that is usually a danger in the life of the

Church of England, but your words are noted. By contrast, Stewart Fyfe asked us to make sure that this will be used. Clearly, the intention is that it will be used but, to a large extent, it lies within the remit of the Archbishops' Council to identify those matters on which it can usefully be used, and I would certainly be among those who would encourage them so to do. That is all I really need to say by way of response. I have already moved the motion.

The Chair. Thank you. The question is: "That the Measure entitled 'Legislative Reform Measure' be finally approved". In accordance with Standing Order 37, I order a counted vote by Houses.

The vote on Item 501: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 16, against none, with no recorded abstentions. In the House of clergy, 92 in favour, none against, with no recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 96 in favour, none against, with no recorded abstentions. The motion

'That the Measure entitled "Legislative Reform Measure" be finally approved'

was carried in all three Houses.

The Chair. It having been carried in all three Houses, the Legislative Reform Measure now stands committed to the Legislative Committee. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 11.25 am

The Chair. Good morning, Synod. For anybody who does not know, I can let you know that the final Rugby Test Match ended at 15 points all. The All Blacks think they were denied a penalty very late on, but there is no provision in the rules of rugby for votes by houses so the series stands as a tie.

ITEM 502

DRAFT STATUTE LAW (REPEALS) MEASURE (GS 2030B)

Draft Measure for Final Drafting and Final Approval (Revised at the February 2017 group of sessions) Consolidation Measure Report by the Steering Committee (GS 2030Z)

The Chair. This brings us on to Items 502 and then 503, the Final Drafting and Final Approval stages of the draft Statute Law (Repeals Measure), for which you will need the draft Measure itself, GS 2030B, and the Report of the Steering Committee, GS 2030Z, which is the same Report of the Steering Committee that you had for the previous item so you will probably find it filed in something like 2027Z if you are wondering where 2030 has got to. We are going to keep the Bishop of Rochester busy. He is having a good

morning and I would invite him to propose Item 502, "That the Synod do take note of this Report", and he has up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

I promise you I do not need ten minutes for this particular item. This is the next in the series, as it were, of these Measures which arise out of the Simplification process.

You will see from the Steering Committee's Report, particularly from paragraphs 8 to 12, that there are a number of proposed drafting amendments to the Statute Law (Repeals) Measure. These are all, we believe, of a minor and technical nature and I will not take you through the detail. The Steering Committee is not proposing any special amendments and therefore I am pleased to move, "That the Synod do take note of the Steering Committee's Report" thereby undertaking the Final Drafting stage.

The Chair: Thank you. Item 502 is now open for debate. I see no one standing. Therefore, I put Item 502 to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod do take note of this Report'

was put and carried on a show of hands

ITEM 503

The Chair: We now move to Item 503 which is the Final Approval stage. Again, I invite the Bishop of Rochester to speak for up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move

'That the Measure entitled "Statute Law (Repeals) Measure" be finally approved.'

It will take a little longer at this stage. The last time when a substantial exercise was undertaken to repeal ecclesiastical statutes that were no longer of practical utility was in 2004. At that time the Statute Law (Repeals) Act 2004 repealed over 40 ecclesiastical enactments following recommendations from the Law Commission. It is very clear that the statute book still contains a significant number of ecclesiastical enactments that have been identified by the Legal Office and others as being spent, obsolete, unnecessary or otherwise not of practical utility. The final list, which is in the Schedule to the Measure, includes some 62 enactments for repeal, either whole Acts or Measures or particular provisions within them. The list was arrived at following a consultation exercise carried

out at the end of 2015.

Some of these Acts or parts of Acts or Measures which are proposed for repeal are fairly dry stuff: the Pluralities Act of 1838, with which you are all very familiar I am sure, and a whole series of Ecclesiastical Leases Acts and other such things.

One or two though are of more interest, not least because they have been of significant importance for the life of the Church. One such is Queen Anne's Bounty, the Act of 1714. When coming to the throne in 1702, Queen Anne told her first Parliament: "My own Principles must always keep entirely firm to the interests and Religion of the Church of England and will incline me to countenance those who have the truest Zeal to support it".

At the time, the mission of the Church was hindered by widespread clerical poverty. Over 5,000 benefice clergy had incomes of under £80 per year. A French visitor at the time Henri Misson observed as follows: "Before the Reformation, the English Clergy were extremely rich, but Things are quite altered since that Time; many have enough, few have too much, an abundance have too little. There are a vast many poor wretches whose benefices do not bring them in enough to buy them clothes. This obliges them to look out for other Ways, and those often sordid ones, to get their bread, and thus the Ministry grows scandalous". I make no comment as to whether there are any parallels.

In 1703, Archbishop Sharp of York put a plan to the Queen under which the first fruits and tenths, taxes which the Crown had received from all benefices since the time of Henry VIII, would be used to augment poorer livings. A number of Queen Anne's Bounty Acts were passed between that date of 1703 up until 1870 in order to establish the Bounty on a better footing and to facilitate the augmentations that it would provide. The Bounty succeeded to a very considerable extent in alleviating clerical poverty and ensuring the availability of clergy to attend to the cure of souls in every parish across the land. The Bounty formally ceased to exist in 1947 when it and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were merged into the then new Church Commissioners. All functions, rights and privileges of the Bounty now vest in the Commissioners who therefore continue that work for which Queen Anne's Bounty was established. The Act of 1714 is the last of the Acts relating to Queen Anne's Bounty that remains on the statute book. Although it seems a little bit of a sad thing, therefore, to be repealing it, nonetheless, it has no continuing function. The provisions of that, together with the other statutes and instruments included in the provisions of this Measure, have become obsolete.

The purposes for which it made provision, making more effectual her late Majesty's gracious intention for augmenting the maintenance of the poor clergy, are the purposes which, even when we repeal the Act, we continue to honour today, albeit by different means.

As we repeal that Act through this Measure, if it receives its Final Approval, we also repeal numerous Acts and Measures of more recent dates, which suggests that the relative

modernity of a provision is not necessarily an indication of its practical utility.

Members of Synod, I am pleased to move the motion which stands in my name at Item 503.

The Chair. Thank you, Bishop. There was a moment when I thought the Bishop was going to propose a repeal of the Reformation on the grounds the clergy were better off without it, but he stayed his hand on that one at least.

Item 503 is now open for debate. I need to remind members of Synod that under Standing Order 64 motions for the closure, the speech limit or next business are not in order in this debate.

Canon Peter Bruinvels (Guildford): Obviously I support this. I am just looking at one of the briefing pages and it says this is “removing uncertainty”. I am just uncertain whether there are any other statutes that we ought to be repealing as well while we have this opportunity. As a lawyer myself, I am very conscious that obviously they are not on the list so technically we cannot include them today. Can we be reassured that there is a regular assessing to see if any other statutes need to be repealed? There is one on education, and I am quite interested as Vice-Chairman of the Guildford DBE to know what that is actually about. I think we need a watching brief on this. As a Church Commissioner myself, I am sad to see another bit of the Queen Anne’s Bounty disappearing perhaps into the sunset, but I think it will be quite helpful. We are told it is removing any uncertainty and that these are the ones we have today. I obviously support the Measure totally.

The Chair. Thank you. The thought that all uncertainty might be removed from the Church of England would be a very strange notion indeed. I see no one else standing. I therefore invite the Bishop of Rochester to respond to the debate.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I am grateful to Mr Bruinvels for his contribution. The list of statutes, part statutes, Measures and Acts that are included in the Schedule was arrived at after both consultation and, I am assured, a fair trawl by the Legal Office through these things. That is not to say that there will not be other occasions when such changes are needed, and just to assure you that a weather eye will be kept upon that and, if there are any such, doubtless further Measures can be brought forward to the Synod.

The Chair. Thank you very much. I therefore put the question: “That the Measure entitled ‘Statute Law (Repeals) Measure’ be finally approved”, and in accordance with Standing Order 37 I order a counted vote by Houses.

The vote on Item 503: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 18, against none, with no recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 98 in favour, none against, with no recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 106 in favour, none against, with 2

recorded abstentions. The motion

‘That the Measure entitled “Statute Law (Repeals) Measure” be finally approved’

was carried in all three Houses.

The Chair: The Statute Law (Repeals) Measure now stands committed to the Legislative Committee. This concludes Item 503. Thank you for your attention

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 11.40 am

ITEM 504

SPECIAL AGENDA I LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

DRAFT PENSIONS (PRE-CONSOLIDATION) MEASURE (GS 2032B)

Draft Measure for Final Drafting and Final Approval (Revised at the February 2017 group of sessions) Report by the Steering Committee (GS 2032Z)

The Chair: We come now to Item 504 and 505, the Final Drafting and Final Approval stages of the Draft Pensions (Pre-consolidation) Measure. Members will need the draft Measure, GS 2032B and the Report of the Steering Committee, GS 2032Z. I now call upon the Bishop of Rochester to move Item 504, “That the Synod do take note of this Report”. Bishop, we are working you hard this morning, but you still have up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report.’

Before coming to the third of these Measures, if I may place on record my thanks to the members of the Steering Committee and of the Revision Committee who have worked on these three items of legislation to bring them to Synod today. Thank you to members of both Committees for their attention to detail, which has been really important not least in relation to these particular Measures. Can I also thank those who in my absence at the February group of sessions steered them through the revision stage. I confess to having been absent due to convalescence from reparative surgery after a little incident on a ski slope, about which I feel slightly shamefaced because it was a self-inflicted injury, but there we are. I am grateful to those who stood in on that occasion particularly and also to the members of the Committee for their general work.

In relation to the final Measure within this trio, the Pensions (Pre-Consolidation) Measure, which now comes to us for Final Drafting, the Steering Committee, as you will see from this Report, has made one drafting amendment to the draft Measure, and that relates to

clause 2(7) and just clarifies and makes plain the application of this Measure within the Diocese in Europe. There are no other proposed amendments, there are no special amendments, and therefore I am pleased to move the motion which stands in my name at 504, thereby bringing about the Final Drafting of this Measure.

The Chair: Item 504 is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Revd Canon Debbie Flach (Europe): Thank you for section 2(7). As a Proctor in the Province of Canterbury, I am pleased to see that we are rightfully belonging, but my particular question is on Schedule 2.1, where it says, "The Board may transfer to the funded scheme the sum for the time being standing to the credit of the Clergy (Widows and Dependants) Pensions Fund". My question is does that diminish the care of the clergy widows, and probably widowers as well, and what does "for the time being" mean?

The Chair: I see no one else standing so I invite the Bishop of Rochester to respond.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): Thank you, Debbie, both for your receipt with joy, as it were, of the inclusion of the Diocese in Europe but also for that final point. I am reliably informed by learned friends that that phrase "for the time being" means at the moment of transfer and that there will be no watering down of the benefits for those who are members of this particular fund. Those benefits will be able to be paid out of the whole pension fund, as it were, because the two will be merged and, therefore, I can give you an assurance that there will be no change to the benefits of those who are members of that scheme.

The Chair: I put Item 504 to the vote.

Mr Brian Wilson (Southwark): Point of order. Can I just correct the final statement made by the Bishop?

The Chair: Sorry. Is this a point of order, Mr Wilson?

Mr Brian Wilson (Southwark): It is a point of clarification.

The Chair: I am not sure that we have such things under Standing Orders, I am afraid. Perhaps you could have a conversation with the Bishop afterwards; I am sure he would appreciate that. Thank you.

I put Item 504 to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod do take note of this Report.'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is very clearly carried.

ITEM 505

The Chair: I now invite the Bishop of Rochester to move Item 505, "That the Measure entitled 'Pensions (Pre-consolidation) Measure' be finally approved." Bishop, you have up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I beg to move

'That the Measure entitled "Pensions (Pre-consolidation) Measure" be finally approved.'

Thank you very much indeed. This particular Measure is here as a prelude to something else. It makes a number of small amendments to existing Church pension legislation which are designed to facilitate a subsequent consolidation of the large body of legislation on this subject or to make moderate changes to existing arrangements before that exercise of consolidation is undertaken.

We have already had reference to the transferring or the possibility of the transferring of the Clergy (Widows and Dependants) Pension Fund into the Church of England-funded pension scheme, essentially for reasons of financial efficiency. That transfer, as we have already indicated, will not affect anyone's entitlement to benefits; they will simply be paid out of a funded scheme instead of out of a separate scheme as at present.

This draft Measure also means that various powers of the Church of England Pensions Board are being clarified and certain outdated provisions are either updated or removed altogether. If this Measure passes through Synod for Final Approval this morning, it is intended to introduce a single Pensions Measure which will seek to consolidate all of the Church's pension legislation and it is intended that will come forward at the February group of sessions next year.

That said, I am pleased to move the motion that stands in my name at Item 505 thereby giving Final Approval to this draft Measure.

The Chair: Item 505 is now open for debate. May I remind members that under Standing Order 64 motions for the closure, the speech limit or next business are not in order in this debate.

Mr Brian Wilson (Southwark): I wish to speak in favour of the motion but I would like to make one comment, which is that for the widows and orphans fund, if this motion were not passed one of two things would happen: either the money in that fund would run out before the last widow or orphan died, or the last widow or orphan surviving would bag the pot, so it does actually affect how the money is paid out.

The Chair: I see no one else standing so I invite the Bishop to reply.

The Bishop of Rochester (Rt Revd James Langstaff): I thank Mr Wilson for that clarification. It affects how the money is paid out but it does not affect the benefits, which I think is the important bit of that. Indeed, hopefully it assures them and prevents the danger, as you have indicated, of the pot running out while there are still beneficiaries around and ensures that they do indeed receive their benefits. I think there is nothing else I need to say and I have already moved the motion.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. The question is: “That the Measure entitled “Pensions (Pre-consolidation) Measure’ be finally approved”. In accordance with Standing Order 35, I order a counted vote by Houses. We now vote on Item 505.

The vote on Item 505: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 21, against none, with no recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 109 in favour, none against, with no recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 123 in favour, none against, with no recorded abstentions. The motion

‘That the Measure entitled “Pensions (Pre-consolidation) Measure” be finally approved’

was carried in all three Houses.

As a result, the Pensions (Pre-consolidation) Measure now stands committed to the Legislative Committee. That concludes this item of business. Thank you.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman)* took the Chair at 11.56 am

ITEM 10

INTRODUCTORY SESSION ON FORMS OF NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR LOCAL CHURCHES

The Chair: We now move to Item 10 on our agenda. It is my pleasure to invite Mrs Rebecca Salter to make a presentation on Forms of National Support for Local Churches.

Mrs Rebecca Salter (ex officio): I have to confess this is not the most snazzy presentation; it is really just me speaking, but hopefully that will suffice. This is just to

give you a little overview of what we will be doing this afternoon. We are inviting you all to join us on something slightly experimental; so experimental, Synod, you can choose where you go. I know! It is a big decision. With that in mind, you might find it helpful to have GS 2069 to hand where you can see a bit more about the details of where you could choose to spend your time.

The Business Committee and Archbishops' Council have designed this afternoon's programme in response to feedback from you. Following the very brief introduction that I will give you now, after lunch the majority of the time will be spent in workshops and we will end the item back here in the Chamber for a short debate on how the national Church can best support you in your local parishes and workplaces and all the other places that we exist.

The aim of these workshops is really to create better links between Synod and our national work through time for practical sessions. These will allow local ministry in our own parishes in context to inform and be informed by the national work streams that we have going on at the moment that support local ministry in parishes. We are also looking for your ideas and input into future work programmes that we might do. The idea is to be more hands-on, to work together and to showcase some of the areas of work that we are currently undertaking from the Archbishops' Council, which is in partnership with other NCIs, with funding from the Church Commissioners and other ecumenical organisations that we have been working with.

We have had to choose a few areas to focus on. We thought that six workshops were sufficient. We realise that means that some important areas of work are not covered as part of the afternoon today. That is not a reflection on how important we think things are but how we felt the various strands of work that we have going on hung together for this particular session this afternoon.

We shaped the afternoon around the Archbishops' Council's new objective on evangelism, which is to bring more of the people of England to the faith of Christ through the Church of England with the aim to halt the fall in numbers of the Church of England worshippers in dioceses representing half the population of England and to see growth in numbers in a quarter of dioceses.

The workshop areas we have chosen are either directly linked to this objective or closely associated with it. We recognise that in most of these areas there is overlap between what we do to serve the common good, to minister in our local communities and to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to all.

This afternoon, we are focusing on how these six areas that the workshops address relate more specifically to our witness of Jesus Christ and how we can hold a clear vision together as a Church we are called to be living witnesses to God's great love and power and make known to all Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

In the letter to the Colossians, we find the Apostle Paul writing to one of the early churches, encouraging them as they partner with him in this great calling: “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message so that I may proclaim it clearly as I should. Be wise in the way you act towards outsiders. Make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversations be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone”.

We are called first to pray that God’s message would find open doors, a welcome in people’s lives. The Archbishops have echoed this call to us to be devoted in prayer in *Thy Kingdom Come*, a focused ten days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost, for the empowering of the Holy Spirit to enable our evangelism and witness. Every diocese has been involved. Nearly every cathedral held a *Thy Kingdom Come* event, and thousands of individuals pledged to pray for their family and friends who do not yet follow Jesus for themselves.

Many other denominations joined in, so we prayed together for the evangelisation of our nation. This year, *Thy Kingdom Come* has a really big global dimension to it as 85 other countries got involved. The workshop that will be happening on *Thy Kingdom Come* is an opportunity to review what has happened with that so far and focus on ongoing strategy as we turn prayer to action both personally and in local churches, and to listen to feedback from Synod members about where the future of that piece of work may go.

From this start, rooted in prayer, we then look to how we can be the answer to our prayers in some of the other workshops that we have. In regular parish life we have specific opportunities to minister to people at the time of significant life events through weddings, the baptism of a child or the funeral of a loved one. Life events are a major opportunity for one-to-one contact and relationship building with the people we meet. These are often the people on the fringes of our Church communities or not connected to Church at all.

This workshop will enable Synod members to hear about the work that the Life Events team are undertaking, the research that is behind this work, gain an overview of the resources that are being developed nationally to help support parishes in this ministry, to see what new tools can be used to create discussion and action across the Church and discuss core questions around the missional and community impact of engaging with life events.

Moving on from that, we also have a further workshop looking at digital and social media presence. Digital and social media present new opportunities for the Church of England to build meaningful, lasting relationships that ultimately drive spiritual and numerical growth in communities across the country. With funding from the Church Commissioners, the new Digital Communications team at Church House is focused on discipleship, evangelism, campaigning and websites to encourage regular churchgoers and to also

bring new people to faith. This workshop will explain the new strategy in more detail, share the latest research and gather Synod members' thoughts on what support is needed for local churches to get the most out of this three-year programme of work.

When national events are marked or celebrated, local churches have opportunities to get involved to build new relationships or strengthen existing ones between community and Church amongst fringe members and new people. We saw this happen with the Diamond Jubilee celebrations for the Queen and also the celebrations to mark her 90th birthday. Another more sombre opportunity was the Remembrance Services which were conducted to mark the centenary of the beginning of World War I, and we will get another opportunity in 2018 as we approach the centenary of the end of World War I.

This workshop will look at how the national Church is partnered with hope to resource dioceses and the local church at these key moments and what we have learnt as a result of these. We will look for ideas and creative input from Synod members of our national Church resourcing of local mission and evangelism and highlight how we can make the most of upcoming opportunities in 2018. We are also hoping to hear about any opportunities that we might have missed and have not thought about yet that you will also want to help to resource.

Our fifth workshop this afternoon will focus on the national Church's work to reach out to some of the groups that we have been less able to reach so far, and in particular looking to develop the work of evangelism on outer estates, focusing on how the Church of England can truly be a Church for and of the people. This workshop will listen to participants about their own experiences and insights and work with Synod members to make priorities in this area.

Our final workshop focuses on the viable work across the generations, how we can shape our churches with good intergenerational life that helps young people to stay rooted in the Church. This will look at the latest research into the relationship between young people and the Church, the valuable work of church-based toddler groups and work with Synod members to shape future areas of work in this area.

Each of the workshops will last an hour and a half to give you plenty of time to engage with the material and we are really looking for your feedback and input. We know this is a very different process from things that we have done before, but we want to engage with as many of you as possible and we really want as many of you as possible to come and contribute and bring all your suggestions and ideas to us; it is not just a one-way, "We're going to tell you what we've been up to" experience. I think in many ways we will all get out of this what we really put into it when we go.

In each workshop you will also have a member of the Archbishops' Council who will be there to gather feedback about that particular process of the workshops. That will be how

did the afternoon work and other ideas around that. We really want you to use those opportunities in the workshop to provide that feedback to us.

There should be a slide appearing with details of where each workshop is taking place, but I had a feeling it might not quite appear. As if by magic! There will be Synod staff available to direct you to where you need to go. If there is no room left in the workshop of your choice - hopefully that will not happen, but maybe get there promptly at 2.30 to make sure you can go where you want - someone will help you find an alternative workshop to attend.

We hope that you have a great informative afternoon and we look forward to the debate back here which Mark Sheard will be taking forward at 4.30.

The Chair: Rebecca, thank you so much for helpfully setting the scene for the work we will engage in this afternoon. That brings Item 10 to a close. As there is still time before lunch, happily we can now resume the debate on Item 9, Presence and Engagement.

THE CHAIR *Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham)* took the Chair at 12.08 pm

ITEM 9 (CONTINUED)

PRESENCE & ENGAGEMENT: REPORT FROM THE ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL'S MISSION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL (GS 2063)

The Chair: Good news, everyone. We are now able to resume Item 9, as amended, with Item 54, Presence and Engagement. The item is open for debate.

Dean of Southwark (Very Revd Andrew Nunn): I want to say first of all a very big thank you to everybody - and I will say this on behalf of the Dean of Manchester as well - who sent greetings and prayers and best wishes to both of us following the attacks in Manchester and then the attack at London Bridge. I want to welcome warmly this Report and the motion as amended and say one quite simple thing, and it is about engagement with the Muslim community in particular.

That became, for us, a really powerful part of the experience after the attack on 3 June on London Bridge and in Borough Market. You may have seen on the television news that a young Muslim guy, who is the Chair of our residents' forum, which is basically our parish, came to the deanery because he had nowhere else to go because he lives within the cordon closer to the Cathedral than I do. He came into the deanery that evening and he just wept because everything that he had been working for in terms of cohesion within our community and working together across all of the groups that are represented there, he felt that all of that was under attack and being destroyed.

Over the next weeks, we have been working together to actually go through all of that in some really moving ways. The Bishop of Southwark and I were on London Bridge with

100 imams and Islamic scholars; that was a particularly wonderful occasion. On the Friday after the attack, I was invited to speak during Friday prayers at our local mosque. That was a huge privilege to be able to respond to the sermon that the imam had preached in which he referred to Adam within the Quran and I was able to get up and say exactly the inheritance that we share through Adam is something that unites us, and that goes really, really deep.

Following that, we had a massive community iftar in the Cathedral that we had been planning for the last nine months and it came at just the right moment as 250 people gathered in the Cathedral nave for a wonderful evening of music and speeches and then sharing a biryani together just at the right moment. Well, 9.19 in the evening to be absolutely precise was when the biryani appeared. Then last Monday to be at Finsbury Park Mosque to share in the service of hope with the community there.

All of that comes because the groundwork had been done. I think it is absolutely vital that we all get on with the groundwork of establishing good relationships and friendships across all of the divides that there can be within our society. As has been said, it does not matter where you are, something can happen within any part of our community and we need to be present and engaged at every moment, but out of that groundwork really good things can grow when we need them to grow, as we have experienced now in Southwark. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. After the Bishop of Blackburn I am looking for a motion for closure, please.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Bishop of Blackburn (Rt Revd Julian Henderson): On Wednesday evening this week, seven Muslim leaders and seven Christian leaders from the Blackburn Diocese team met at my house for a vegetarian Arabic meal at one of our meetings of the Anglican Muslim Forum. We had a guest speaker, someone employed to promote the Prevent agenda. His task and presence in the room provoked a rich conversation and several key points emerged in that conversation that I thought I would share with you because they support GS 2063 and also support the recommendations of the recent Casey Review.

First, there was considerable disquiet and opposition to the Prevent agenda in the Muslim community because of the way it often targets and reacts in a biased and prejudicial way against Muslims. It was accepted that something has to be done to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism, but the way the Prevent process works does not help: a referral from a school on a minor matter gets escalated into a major investigation criminalising entirely innocent people.

Secondly, we then discussed a definition of 'extremism' and saw the need to draw a distinction between sincerely and strongly held convictions which would never lead to

violence or hatred and which are to be commended in any faith, and then those convictions which lead to acts of terror and destruction as we have witnessed in Manchester and London recently. Freedom of speech and the right to believe the tenets of a faith must not be clamped down on in an attempt to be rid of violent extremism.

Thirdly, one of the main benefits of the evening was sharing a meal together in a home that, for some, was a very different environment from that which some of our Muslim friends are used to, and the opposite was true when Heather and I went to a Muslim home to be present for their celebration of Eid. Sharing hospitality is a key to breaking down barriers of mistrust and suspicion between different faith groups and then building relationships across faith divides.

Finally, and this is my plea, we give thanks to God for those committed to ministry in P&E parishes. It is a demanding call and we need people and financial support to maintain that witness to the Gospel in communities that are predominantly other faith communities. I am delighted that a quarter of those 12 ordained deacons last Saturday in Blackburn were of Iranian or Pakistani background, and it was a privilege to meet a group of seven able university graduates looking to set up a community in a P&E parish for the long term. Let there be more leaders, ordained and lay, willing to serve in P&E parishes around this country. The labourers are few; let us pray to the Lord of the harvest.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure

The Chair: Yes, that has my consent. Does it have the consent of Synod?

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

The Chair: Thank you. That is clearly carried. I ask the Bishop to respond to the debate. He has up to three minutes. Thank you.

The Bishop of Huddersfield (Rt Revd Jonathan Gibbs): Chair, thank you very much indeed. Very warm thanks to everyone who has taken part this morning. It has been a good debate and we have heard some very good and important stories about what God is doing through presence and engagement across the country. I am only sorry, as I am sure many members are, that time has been so short. Thanks to Susie Leafe, to Debrah McIsaac and Peter Adams for their engagement with the issues in the amendments.

Thank you to Simon Heathfield from the super-diverse Diocese of Birmingham, as we must now call it. Thank you to Lisa Battye for sharing her experience of ministry in an Orthodox Jewish area of Manchester, and to Heather Black from York, who both spoke of how our own faith can be renewed and enriched by contact with people of other faiths. Thank you to Revd Dr Francis-Dehqani for speaking so helpfully from her own personal history of being both Persian and Anglican, and to Bishop Angaelos for speaking so

positively of the work of Presence and Engagement and reminding us that the Church is very much present and engaged.

Then to part 2. Thank you to the Dean of Southwark, reminding us of the importance of standing together with those of other faiths to resist hatred and fear in response to recent events, all based, most importantly, on the groundwork of our ongoing ministry and relationships, week in, week out. This is about our being both present and engaged.

Finally, thanks to the Bishop of Blackburn, raising a number of issues there and reminding us, I think, that presence and engagement gives us the space to have those difficult conversations - difficult conversations with our brothers and sisters in other faith communities and difficult conversations also at times with Government on their behalf.

So a very big thank you to everybody for all that they have given us today. I think it has reminded us very much. We have been able to celebrate in the time available to us all that is going on across our country in different faith communities, about our being there as the members of the Church of England present in those communities, engaged with those communities, celebrating our faith in Christ and our love for our brothers and sisters in the name of Christ. Thank you very much indeed.

The Chair: Thank you. We move to vote on Item 9, as amended, with included Item 54.

The motion

'That this Synod, recognising the Church's continued presence and engagement in parishes, chaplaincies and new missional communities in multi-religious contexts:

- a) commend the national Presence and Engagement (P&E) programme and offer prayerful support for its work over the next five years, requesting that the fruit of this be made available to the whole Church through the P&E Centres and that the programme report back to Synod at the end of this period;*
- b) recognise the cultivation of relationships with other faith communities as a vital component of the Church's mission in today's society, and encourage dioceses to incorporate this into their mission plans;*
- c) re-affirm the Synod report "Sharing the Gospel of Salvation" (GS Misc 956) and call on the P&E Task Group to continue supporting parishes in bearing faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with sensitivity and confidence among people of other faiths; and*

- d) *noting the importance of relationships between churches and people of other faiths in maintaining community peace and solidarity in many P&E parishes, encourage churches and Christian people throughout the nation to reach out to neighbours and colleagues of other faiths to offer solidarity and friendship in times of tension, condemning the attempts of extremists to divide us, and challenging all hatred'*

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is very clearly carried. As you can see from the time, we will be able to adjourn for lunch early. I felt I had a message to give to you before we could go for lunch. No, I do not. That has now changed. Thanks for bearing with us. Just to draw to your attention that on Notice Paper XIII, which I believe is green, is where you will find the rooms for the group work this afternoon. After lunch, group work will begin. Thanks very much for working together this morning and into the afternoon.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman)* took the Chair at 4.31 pm.

The Chair: Good afternoon, members of Synod. Before I invite Mark Sheard to introduce Item 11, I am going to give what I hope many of you may see as good news. I want to inform you that the Prolocutors of the Lower Houses of the Convocations of Canterbury and York and the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the House of Laity have given notice that they will not be requiring a reference under Article 7 in relation to Amending Canons Nos. 36 and 37. Therefore, Item 16, School Admissions Code, will be taken tomorrow afternoon.

ITEM 11

NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR LOCAL CHURCHES: REPORT FROM THE ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL (GS 2069)

The Chair: I now invite Mr Mark Sheard to speak to and move the motion in his name. Mark, you have up to ten minutes.

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio): I beg to move

'That this Synod:

- a) welcome a range of evangelism and growth resources provided by the national church in support of local churches;

- b) note the progress made to support Life Events ministry since it was commissioned by the Archbishops' Council in 2012;
- c) agree to encourage dioceses and parishes to engage with these areas of work through prayer and practical action; and
- d) call on the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops to report back to the Synod on a regular basis on the progress of these areas of support.'

A confession before we start. I have been on the Archbishops' Council, a member of this Synod, for just four months. I am learning horrendously slowly and I am probably going to make all sorts of mistakes through this, so I am going to test your grace and forgiveness as I make this speech and I hope you will pass.

Welcome back to this afternoon's session on National Church Support for Local Churches. I hope you have had an informative and very stimulating afternoon in the workshop of your choice and enjoyed listening and getting involved with some of the current work streams, focusing on resourcing local church growth supported by the NCIs. Having spoken to all the workshop hosts and speakers, I know how grateful they are for Synod's involvement and support in that.

As I walked around the different groups this afternoon, it was thrilling to see the level of attendance and engagement there. I hope you offered then - or if you did not that you will now offer or over the next 24 hours offer - feedback to representatives from the Archbishops' Council and the Business Committee on the process and experience of this afternoon's session.

As we move to focus on the motion, I would like to draw our attention back to the passage from Colossians that Rebecca left us with this morning and that has framed our time together this afternoon. They are great words from the Apostle Paul to a Church that is focused on bringing the Good News of Jesus to every single community in England.

He wrote this, "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful, and pray for us too that God may open a door for our message, so that I may proclaim it as clearly as I should. Be wise in the way that you act towards outsiders. Make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversations be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

A reminder from the Apostle about the importance of starting with prayer and taking opportunities to witness, to speak of our faith, to be people of grace and truth, living lives that elicit questions about who we are and who we follow, being a people with confidence to make the most of every opportunity. I was interested that he put prayer right at the beginning there because it is the prayer that builds confidence.

That is what I heard when I was at the *Thy Kingdom Come* workshop this afternoon, prayer building confidence, confidence because we know the Lord opens doors for us when we pray. In the workshops this afternoon, we did focus on prayer and we focused on some of the many opportunities that are open for us in local church mission, ministry and evangelism.

In the motion before us, we are asking you to encourage the wider participation of the Church as we pray and as we take the opportunities presented to us for sharing God's great message of hope and love in Jesus Christ. Our debate this afternoon is intended to draw the strands together, providing an opportunity for Synod to comment on the work being undertaken and to express views on how the national Church can best provide on-going support for local churches in evangelism, outreach and mission.

We are asking for your support for the Renewal and Reform programme as focused in the Archbishops' Council's objectives on evangelism. The motion itself has four core elements. The first element of the motion calls on Synod to welcome the range of evangelism and growth resources provided by the national Church in support of local churches. Exploring the range of evangelism and growth resources provided at a national level to support local churches was the idea behind the six workshops.

As Rebecca explained earlier, we limited the number of workshops to six and that meant that we could not showcase all the work being done at national level that supports evangelism and growth. Choosing to limit it to six was a judgment not of importance or preference but purely of practicality. Nonetheless, I hope the workshops gave you some insight into the wide, wide range of evangelism and growth resources provided at a national level to support local churches.

It has been a journey of discovery for me over the last four months to see just how much is being done. I thought I knew and I did not. There are so many riches at our disposal. What struck me this afternoon even more was not just the riches that are coming out of the centre, but the riches that are being involved at a local level that can come back into the centre, so that we learn from one another and we are truly partners in the Gospel.

I would like to encourage you, if you have not read paper GS 2069, which supports this debate, to read it. It is going to give you a glimpse of the breadth of resource. You probably only saw enough in one workshop. It would be great to get that wider vision. All the areas of work covered in the workshops offer a challenge and an opportunity to us. Each one of them can be summarised in a few sentences to help us focus as we move into this time of debate.

Thy Kingdom Come, starting with prayer. As Archbishop Justin says, the best decision anyone can ever make is to become a follower of Jesus. *Thy Kingdom Come* has provided a focus for people to join together to pray that those we know will choose to

follow Jesus Christ for themselves. Prayer without action is not what the Gospel is about. We are called to act.

We then looked at five areas of ministry. We looked at life events where every week, every year, local churches have an opportunity to meet families and friends as they mark some of life's really important moments: Weddings, christenings, funerals. The Life Events' team provides resources for these opportunities. Be confident in using them. Digital evangelism. National digital and social media are working together to support local churches across the country. There are huge opportunities. The Christmas 2017 campaign. Opportunities to get involved. National events have opportunities for witness. We have had some experience of that in royal events. In 2018, we will commemorate the centenary of the end of World War I. It is again an opportunity for Church to play a key role in commemoration and remembrance, building relationships in the community, clearly pointing to the one who can bring lasting peace and reconciliation to all.

Inclusion and outreach. We talked about Presence and Engagement this morning. We will not continue to be a Christian presence in every community unless we intentionally become part of the reality of people's lives in the most hard-pressed parts of the country. The people, the clergy and the congregations in those areas need to hear that the Church at large is listening to them, cares about them and is committed to helping them flourish.

In crossing the generations, we need to build bridges between the generations and worship, life and service, from youngest to oldest, so that all flourish. Strong intergenerational relationships in Church help young people stay rooted in the faith for the whole of their lives.

The second element of the motion focuses our attention on the progress made since 2012 on the support of life events ministry. Weddings, funerals and baptisms of children have been at the heart of parish ministry for generations. In 2015, the Church of England conducted 148,250 funerals, 109,000 baptisms, 44,670 weddings - a valued ministry amongst the wider community. This ministry offers the local church massive opportunities for mission and evangelism.

The life events work began with the Weddings Project in 2008, followed by projects on the baptism of children and funerals. The projects have all started with nationally commissioned and funded research, which has led to the creation of bespoke resources to support local church ministry. The resources enrich our local churches' offer to those who come to us for weddings, baptisms and funerals. They help local churches connect confidently and build stronger links with those who come to us for life events.

Enabling the Church to offer a distinctively Christian experience clearly signposts faith in Jesus Christ and invites all those involved to return and journey with us towards deeper faith. If you were unable to attend the Life Events workshop, do read the details of the project in the Report to Synod. May I take this opportunity to particularly highlight the

online resources on the Church Support Hub that could help your church focus its ministry in this vital area.

The third component of our motion this afternoon is to agree to encourage dioceses and parishes to engage with these areas of work through prayer and practical action. We ask for your support in these areas of work, your prayers for those who work nationally and your continued involvement in prayer and ministry in the growth of the Church, wherever God has placed you.

Finally, the motion notice, Synod, to hold the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops to account on this. I leave that with you.

The Chair. Item 11 is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): Mainly, I just wanted to say thank you to all those involved with this absolutely brilliant initiative, in the way that you are supporting us in the parishes by what you do at a national level. I just wanted to share a couple of very ordinary stories. I am sure many of you have got similar ones, but just to encourage you to see how those initiatives are bearing fruit in the parishes.

This year, our multi-parish benefice participated in *Thy Kingdom Come* by having a large prayer room in one of our seven churches. After we had had the prayer week, in which people from all these different villages came and prayed, one of our local schools came to see the prayer space. We talked about *Thy Kingdom Come* a bit to them in terms of praying for the world you long to see. You would be very moved to see the prayers that they wrote.

Obviously, they were meeting the week after *Thy Kingdom Come* when they had gone back to school. They had come to see how the local church had been praying. When they came they wanted to join in and they prayed, "Dear Jesus, we want to see a world where people do not kill each other, where people love each other". It was a very precious thing. Many of the teachers went away very moved. Nearly every child that came wanted to light a candle. It was a wonderful thing to see. These were children who were coming to see after we had been praying in the space.

Another little story -because these things are happening every week and they are little things that happen because of what you are doing at a national level - I have really found the stuff that is online about life events so useful to be able to refer people to. Just last week, somebody who had been looking at the baptism website, because I had referred them to that to think about what they wanted in terms of what kind of service for their child, when we met to talk about it in more detail, they said, "You know, I really want to find out more about the Christian faith and Jesus". I was able to invite them to a group

where they are going to do just that. Thank you very much for what you are doing. It is making a difference.

Mrs Caroline Herbert (Norwich): I would like to commend this motion to Synod and particularly commend clause (a). I recognise how helpful these resources that are produced can be and especially those marking national events. The Church of England, as we know, has a presence in every community. We were hearing that this morning in the context of multicultural communities in large towns, but it also has a presence in rural communities, even those where there are possibly more sheep than people.

That presence in each community gives us opportunities to be the centre of commemorating national events. These resources can be a great help to those planning and delivering the events and helping to point people on to say something of Jesus. At the moment, it feels like the centenary of the First World War is a particular focus. Maybe that is on my mind because my husband is a curate. He was at a meeting last week planning a short service about the start of the Battle of Passchendaele. We have also had a short ceremony to mark the start of the War and one to mark the start of the Battle of the Somme last year and we are looking to do something next year. These resources are helpful.

As the Church builds a reputation for doing things like this, people then turn to the Church in times of trouble. We heard powerfully about that yesterday in the context of Grenfell Tower but, also, on other occasions when there is just a need to do something to somehow mark something that has happened.

For us, it was a couple of years ago with the shooting of holidaymakers on the beach in Tunisia and the town council came to the church and said, "Well, can you do something? There is going to be a national minute's silence, can you take the lead? Something short and simple?" Building up that reputation, that track record, means you are then in a position to do more when there are moments of crisis.

As well, we have opportunities to speak of the hope we have. Maybe we are just talking opportunities to, as we have heard, build relationships and connect with people in the community who would not normally come into the church building. Maybe it is as simple as helping them to step over the threshold for something. Maybe it is having conversations with them or them realising that their next-door neighbour that they quite like, "Oh, you are a Christian, you go to church". Maybe we will have an opportunity for a deeper conversation and one where we can point people to the eternal hope we have in Jesus Christ.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): I too want to speak in very strong support of this motion and particularly on paragraphs (a) and (c). I chose to go to the *Thy Kingdom Come* workshop, which was a very good choice because it was led by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

One of the things that we talked about and celebrated were the videos that came with that programme - lots of them. One that drew particular attention was the one taken very early in the morning in the Palace Gardens in Lambeth with the Archbishop of Canterbury - either walking, or, some would say, running but not very fast - saying how essential it was, and the best thing in his life had been the decision to follow Jesus. That was the power of that particular video.

We talked about the perennial problem in Church life, which is when you have a great initiative how do you decide whether to continue and when to stop, and is it going to happen in 2018? I sincerely hope that it will. I would like to offer a piece of wisdom or advice or just a point of view, which is that we might commit to three years, i.e. up to 2020, because it does seem from the anecdotes that came back that it is gathering momentum. I think taking a decision one year at a time is probably not helpful, but if we review it in 2020 then at least there would be a built-in review that would be guaranteed. That would be my suggestion.

In terms of how do we take it forward beyond 2020, I have another suggestion, which is to link *Thy Kingdom Come* - which has come out of the Evangelism Task Group - to the work that is going forward under the strapline, *Setting God's People Free*.

We have been given a progress report, which is available on the information desk, with *Setting God People's Free*. There are a number of the 14 action points where I think it is particularly appropriate for the issues around *Thy Kingdom Come* to be woven in. If we start now, maybe by 2020 we will all be ready to take it forward. Enriching theology of the laity and how to share your faith would benefit from this.

The Inter Diocesan Learning Community, let us get the dioceses talking to each other about how sharing their faith is going on in different places. The Strategic Development Fund is mentioned, particularly in relation to *Setting God's People Free*. Can we see a shift or a tweak towards supporting these initiatives in sharing your faith through that and encouraging parishes to do so? We had a very good advance notice of a new booklet that is coming out from the Bishop of Chelmsford.

Then the whole issue of culture change. This is a matter of culture change. We were reminded that it is not in our culture - and never has been in the Church of England since 16 or 15 whenever it was - to naturally share our faith because we assumed that everyone was a Christian. Things have changed now and we are in a position where we do need to share our faith and we need to do it with confidence. That culture change, where we are all, "gossiping the Gospel", to use that well-known phrase, is something that we could aim to achieve.

The stream on nurturing and disciplining future leaders is another area where we can develop this. Are we looking for the natural evangelists to come into leadership? How

are we doing that? Finally, incorporating *Setting God's People Free* with a discipleship stream, I think, also is a very good opportunity.

I strongly commend this debate, this motion. I think that *Thy Kingdom Come* has been really amazing so far and we have levers for taking this forward through *Setting God's People Free* and I hope we will take that on.

Mrs Anne Martin (Guildford): I welcome GS 2069 and the initiatives that it covers, but I believe there is one aspect of mission and evangelism that is apparently missing. Maybe it is elsewhere, but I wanted just to remind and draw Synod's attention to it.

Sharing food and fellowship is an intrinsic and important part of Christian life. It is so important now in the society that we live in where significant numbers of people are lonely and isolated at many stages of life. Many young people in their 20s and 30s do not actually have time, because they are working such long hours, to shop, to cook and to meet people. We need practical ways for Church communities to set up and reach out, offering meals and fellowship. This may sound very mundane, but to do this requires courage, practical skills, experience and finance to get it going, to launch out into the unknown as to whether two people might turn up or 30 people might turn up. There is communication. There is health and safety.

There are all sorts of issues that practical experience to be passed through and show ways of doing this could help enormously. It is from small things like this that large things grow. I am very grateful to have the opportunity to say this, for I believe this is a simple and generous gift that we can make as Christians without ties. It is an open gift that we can make.

Revd Peter Kay (St Albans): "What must I do to be saved?" "They replied, "Believe of the Lord Jesus and you will be saved - you and your household." "Then, they spoke the Word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house'." That exchange between Paul, Silas and the jailer in Philippi is often used, rightly, as a crucial text in evangelism. It also gets wheeled out in that slightly tired debate about adult versus children's baptisms. I think it also calls us to look afresh at the changing world of family dynamics and our ministry across the generations.

I was inspired by this afternoon's intergenerational ministry seminar. My own context is as a vicar of three - soon to be four - village churches in North Bedfordshire. One of them has the oldest demographic in the diocese. None of them has a Sunday school, as such, and it can be a challenge to provide a relevant environment for children and families. Indeed, having a toddler of our own has shown to my wife and I how very user-unfriendly at least some of our services can be.

I think a lot can be done if we reframe some of the questions and issues in the light of Scripture and not just relying on what we are used to. The jailer's family in Philippi and

the early Christians did not have Sunday school and, yet, they survived and thrived even in the face of the fiercest persecution.

Family life is changing and, rather, I think that the worship and ministry across generations, combined with age appropriate teaching, can be a powerful combination. At the other end of the age range as well, people born earlier, as was described in the seminar that we heard.

I feel somewhat conflicted. We worry about the average age of people in our congregations. Of course, families and children are so important, but with an ageing population it is in that population that we find so many lonely and vulnerable people. Given the command from Jesus to care for those most vulnerable in our society, surely the elderly should be perhaps the highest priority in the upside-down values of the Kingdom.

Speaking personally, my relationship with my grandparents was - and, in a sense, still is - one of the most enriching and formative relationships in my life. Children, adults, the elderly being together is a beautiful, God-given thing. I think we need to rework and reframe our approach to intergenerational ministry. I recently spoke to a vicar with many years' experience in pioneer ministry, who said that rediscovering intergenerational worship was perhaps the most pressing missionary need that we have.

Parents during the week, perhaps with Saturday activities as well for their kids, like to have time with their children. They like to be together. Worship together can empower parents as well in their prime responsibility to pass on their faith to their children.

Thank you for this afternoon. Thank you to those who ran the intergenerational seminar as well. Let us keep the main thing the main thing - thinking about the debate later on - but let us encourage and rethink our ministry across the generations.

The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell): Thank you for the opportunity for the workshops this afternoon and thank you just as much for the debate that follows, which gives us a chance to speak about and air these things which are so central to our life in Christ. I want to speak very briefly about the inter-relationship between spirituality, evangelism and catechesis, three things that are held together in the whole work of mission in the Church, and yet I am aware that some in the Church who feel - and I think they/we are probably wrong - that it is only certain models of evangelism which are being presented and favoured at the moment.

I think it is really important that each of us in our different traditions and contexts discovers a way of doing evangelism that works for us and which flows from our own spiritual traditions. I am very encouraged by the *Thy Kingdom Come* initiative and I want to echo the earlier speaker who was saying that we need to continue with this, because I think out in the parishes it is just beginning to take purchase as an idea, and we need to commit

to doing it for a few more years so that it can become a bit of a “business as usual” because, from prayer and from reflecting upon our own spiritual traditions, we are likely to find ways of doing evangelism that works for us and works for the people that we are called to serve.

In recent years in the Chelmsford Diocese, we have done a lot of work on how we can do evangelism in a way that works for us and works for our community. We are beginning to see some significant progress insofar as evangelism is beginning to be business as usual; as usual as having a harvest supper, having a Christmas bazaar - we do evangelism in the local church. That has been a huge blessing. However, of course, as you do it so you learn, and one of the things we are learning is that many of our clergy and lay ministers are not terribly comfortable about speaking about the Gospel outside the context of the Church. The more that we focus on this, the more there will be other things that we have to learn. In *Thy Kingdom Come* we have found a way of talking about these things and doing these things in a way which unites us. That is so important and relevant for other agendas in our Church.

So often as a Synod recently we have found ourselves in friction with each other. I want to say to the Synod as a Bishop who did not feel terribly comfortable sitting through the last Synod, it is my heart's desire to make Christ known. That is the reason I am a Bishop. It is my heart's desire to make Christ known, and to serve the Church in such a way that we might live and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because it is good and it is beautiful and it is true. It is when we do it together we discover we have so much to learn from each other and it just helps a little bit to put those other things into perspective.

For every single reason I can think of under the sun, let us please unite around this agenda of prayer, evangelism, and I want to add to it catechesis. That is where the Digital Evangelism Group - and you could only go for one, could you not - is so important, because that is beginning to explore how we commend, explain and teach other people to learn the faith. If I just had a bit more time, I would like to try to evangelize you, because it is so good. There is a line in Pope Paul VI's Encyclical on Evangelization in the 1960s which says something like - and I am quoting from memory - “None of us is ever fully evangelized”. Every day I need the Gospel to transform my life. That is a dynamic to live out of, and when we live out of that dynamic, sisters and brothers, we can be evangelized and then we will be much, much, much better at evangelizing others.

Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool): I would like to draw Synod's attention to (c) in the motion that we are debating, “That this Synod: agree to encourage dioceses and parishes to engage with these areas of work through prayer and practical action”. I am assuming that that applies to each and every one of us here this afternoon. I wonder whether in fact that is going to happen, or I would pose the question how is that going to happen.

I would imagine that most of you will go back to your dioceses and perhaps do a report to the next diocesan synod. You may even go to deanery synod and you will tell them

what a wonderful afternoon you have had this afternoon and the great resources that the Church of England are producing from the centre, sentiments with which I would entirely agree. Please do not feel that I am being critical of any of these initiatives because I am not. People will listen and they will nod approvingly and say, "That is very interesting, that is great". I do not know about you, but I want to see things happening. I want to see change. I want to see people actually making the most of these opportunities.

Here is a suggestion for you. Perhaps, depending on which workshop you went to, you could go back to your diocese and become the advocate for that particular workshop in your diocese, perhaps in your deanery, perhaps in your parish as well, and you should start promoting where you have been and what you have seen. You should be asking other people around and saying, "How can we promote this area of work in our diocese?" We may find, of course, that it cuts across what the diocesan agendas already are. Lots of dioceses have strategies for growth, and that is something for which we praise God. We also have to fit these into those growth strategies and that is going to require a bit of work. My challenge is that we vote wholeheartedly for this motion, but we understand the implications for each one of us of section (c) in our motion.

Mrs Sue Adeney (Worcester) Picture, if you can, the image of Archdeacon Nikki Groarke, the Archdeacon of Dudley, walking on our *Thy Kingdom Come* pilgrimage, Walk the Cross, speeded up to reduce 12 miles to about two minutes. This went viral across our diocesan web pages and so on. As she staggered through fields of cows chasing her (so she said) and oilseed rape way over her head (I can vouch for that because I had done that path just before her) was this the use of digital media in outreach? Yes, perhaps it was. It was part of our efforts for *Thy Kingdom Come*.

I have just participated in the workshop on life events and I was struck so profoundly by the potential here to reach 400,000 people per week through baptisms, weddings and funerals. That is 15 to 20 million per year, far more than we can reach through our Christmas services. What an extraordinary opportunity and thank you so much, Sandra, for that inspiring workshop.

The only thing I am disappointed about this afternoon is that I could not attend all of them, but the benefits of these activities are not just about evangelism, or perhaps they are after our last speaker; perhaps we all do need that evangelism.

As a member of a rural church in Worcestershire these national initiatives and the support that they give makes us feel that we can be part of a larger Church, and that gives us huge confidence and offers us affirmation. It tells us that what we can do can make a difference, even in the smallest possible way, sometimes very unexpectedly, not at all planned. For example, an elderly congregation finds that they could offer prayer for 24 hours in their homes, or the tiny little church that our Walk the Cross pilgrimage arrived at suddenly is visited by Archdeacon Nikki or one of our Bishops. What they can provide is hospitality; a huge number of cakes. Thank goodness we were walking!

This is all about Presence and Engagement, as was already mentioned, and it is what we all should be doing and we already are. It is what we are about as Christians. Thank you for this afternoon and I do commend this Report and the motions.

Miss Rosemary Walters (Canterbury): I am just a bit concerned that we have a rather glib use of the word “community”. We keep on saying, “Community, community, community”. I live on an estate, but I do not live in a community, and the reason for that is that I live on an estate of low-cost housing and most of the houses have been bought up and are rented out, and many of the people who rent them out are on very short leases so you do not get to know anybody. I went to the workshop on inclusion and outreach, and I felt I did need to make this point, that it does not follow that just because people are living near each other on an estate they are living in a community. I think this is something that we need to take account of. I would just like to make the plea that people do not think automatically that there are settled families living on estates because that is often not the case. Whatever we are going to do to speak to people about the Gospel, we do need to take that into account.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): I would like to make a few comments. I wandered around the Exhibition Centre like a lost soul, being late back from a penal affairs meeting, and ended up in the digital workshop. It is not my cup of tea but I will take the message to those who know more. Pete Spiers asked us what practical actions we can all do. We have just had a lay conference in my diocese. I will go back, like many of you, and tell my congregation what I have done. They appreciate it. Lots of other people in my diocese, and no doubt in yours, who do not come here and who are not on diocesan synods would like to know what we all get up to, and get to know pretty soon. Those of us on committees have all been encouraged to write the minutes and to circulate them as soon as possible so that everybody in the diocese can get hold of them, and I will be encouraging the learned people on computers in my diocese to put them on the website so that everybody can read them. There is a dearth and a wanting to know what we are all up to and what has been going on. There is a job for someone.

Ven. Luke Miller (London): I very much welcome this Report and the debate that has gone with it. Like Mr Freeman, I was at the digital workshop, which was excellent. In the last few years, because I was the Archdeacon in London who could not run fast enough, I was asked to be the one who should take up Tweeting. I have enormously enjoyed it and I am @ArchdeaconLuke if anyone is interested. I have learned about hashtags and about dubbing things in and about how things trend. I gather that #Synod is trending at the moment. People are looking at what we do and finding out. The data workshop showed how, by using the data carefully to be able to think through what it is and to whom we are speaking, we have been able to reach out to so many more people and to encourage them specifically to come to church more last Christmas. There will be a new attempt to build on that this year and to do that in a way that leads on into both catechesis and an even more effective invitation to continue to attend at churches.

The programme and the proposals grapple with some significant challenges. As Chairman of the London Diocesan Board for Schools, I welcome the attempt to try to give us resources to reach to those children who in their transition from a church primary school into secondary school, which is so often not a church school - we need so many more places - we can reach to them through their use of digital media, although my own boys tell me that I am not allowed anywhere near Instagram, and I am sure I will have to work that one through.

We need though to be careful of our inclusion. It seems to me that this is also an important part of this work. The thing is that when you use something which is in some senses marketing - and, let us face it, that is partly what evangelisation is, although more on that in a moment - we target and choose to whom we reach. We need to be careful that we do not simply reach out to people who, frankly, look and sound like me. We need to be able to reach out into those places where community is not community. We need to continue with our bias towards the poor, to people from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, to all those whom we seek to reach with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

It would be terrible if we stayed inside the bubble rather than reaching out. This seems to me to be a challenge also in our intergenerational work. It is so difficult to reach beyond one's own part of the world, wherever one stands.

This must be founded in prayer and in the sacraments. I had the privilege of some study time a year or so ago and studied Fr Congreve of the Society of St John the Evangelist, now largely forgotten but an extraordinary teacher in his time. He taught that the Christian evangelist brings the sacraments and therefore brings not simply good news about Jesus Christ, but Jesus Christ himself. Whatever your theological position on sacraments, nevertheless we all would say that as members of the body of Christ we bring Christ Himself with us and therefore, rooted in Him, it can only be Him whom we reveal in the work that we do.

This must be bubbling out of our individual lives. One of the things that came through the workshop was the need for enthusiasm. People know all kinds of things about us. They know how we take our coffee. They know which football team we support, especially if we are the Bishop of Willesden. They know exactly where we stand on so many things. Do they know that we stand in Jesus Christ? This is, or should be, a relatively easy thing for us, and yet for so many of us it is so difficult, whether in our Twitter feeds, in our conversation or in other forms of engagement. Let us pray that we may be walking sacraments of Christ, that He may be revealed in us and that this work may go forward to full effect. Thank you.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): I would like to commend to you what John Freeman has just said about making sure that the message goes out quickly. Of course, those who are really enthusiastic will have been watching on the live stream anyway and will know it

before they have been told through paper or electronic means when we get home.

I went to the inclusion and outreach workshop, which was excellent. I was reminded of something while I was there, which was of a church which had some words on the wall just behind the altar where the “e” had fallen off and it said, “Glory to God in the high st”, and it made a much better statement than the original.

The Archbishop of Canterbury earlier today reminded us that printing got things a little bit further around the place quicker and that nowadays through social media things get round very quickly. There is one thing that is slower than the printing 500 years ago and that is Church of England Reports. In 1985 *Faith in the City* had as one of its remits, “To examine the strengths, insights, problems and needs of the Church’s life and mission in Urban Priority Areas”. The term “Urban Priority Areas” is used to include inner city districts and many large corporation estates and other areas of social deprivation. They had a 2006 Report, which was a follow-up, and then they had a 25-year celebration in 2010 and 2011, but we have not heard much since then.

The question I have is, can we please make sure that it does not take 32 years for the Church of England to get off its backside and do something?

Revd Dr Miranda Threlfall-Holmes (Durham): I just want to very briefly speak to put on record my appreciation and thanks to Sandra Miller and the Life Events team. The quality of the research and the resources that they have produced has been outstanding and they have provided - I have been to all three training sessions over the last couple of years in Durham Diocese - the best training events I have ever attended, certainly in the Church of England but I think more widely as well; absolutely outstanding and exemplary. I would like to suggest that that and that experience that is being created in-house of doing that incredibly well-structured research - market research, focus groups, looking at secular things as well as theological things - and then producing an incredibly high-quality suite of resources is using all the other things that we do as well. We do not want to have that as a separate little bubble, “That is a marketing thing. That is about selling things so we will do that nicely and the rest we will do in-house”. I went to the inclusion and outreach on estates workshop, which is obviously at an earlier stage in some ways, but behind that we need that level of research and listening and deep quality of attention to the people that we are seeking to serve and reach that we have already developed an expertise in the life events project, so I commend that.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I too warmly welcome this motion and this Report. Like Sue Adeney, I would very much like to have attended each of these sessions, and I trust they will be recorded on webcam somewhere so we will be able to go through them. The thing that really struck me, and I do not know whether it was intentional or not, was the resonance that I found with the Gospel, which is so special. *Thy Kingdom Come* is rooted in prayer. We have seen over and over again in the Gospel how Jesus actually founded His ministry on prayer. Life events: the wedding at Canaan, the very start of Jesus’ ministry.

Looking at digital evangelism, they did not have Microsoft in those days, but they did have sandals and staffs and Jesus sent out his disciples two-by-two to go and spread the Word. National events are an opportunity for witness. Indeed, we see the whole Gospel framed by the Census and by the Passover. I recall having attended a sermon with Rowan Williams where he spoke of the entry to Jerusalem as a backdrop for Passion Week and how that would raise the profile of what Jesus was about to do for us.

Then crossing the generations: “Suffer the little children to come unto me”. I have to say that the recent election results have shown the huge gap between the generations as the polling has shown such a wide diversity, and we are not alone in needing to find new ways to communicate afresh to each new generation.

I have left last of all, because I think it is so important, the inclusion and outreach because this comes directly into the second great Commandment “to love our neighbour as ourselves”. It is absolutely at the core of the Christian faith. I believe it is the cutting edge of our Christian faith when it comes to communicating to people who see no relevance for the Christian faith in their lives, because it brings food banks, it brings street pastors, it brings counselling, it is a relief from loneliness, it is absolutely central. In this area I think we tend to marginalise and treat as rather tangential those people who put those 23 million hours a month into community action within the Church. I believe that should be brought centrally into diocesan action plans. It should be in deaneries. It should be in parishes. It is by taking the love of God which flows into us and by which we are challenged to open the sluice gates and let that unconditional love flow through us into everyone that we meet; it is by doing that that we communicate the Christian faith to those people where we really do least well in terms of communicating with.

I remember some years ago, people used to refer to the “low-hanging fruit” and how we should go for the low-hanging fruit in our evangelism. I believe it is really important to go right over the penumbra around the Christian faith and reach out to those who really see no relevance, because if we can communicate by unconditional love to our neighbours and to those around us and through our community action, we will bring not only them into the Christian faith but the penumbra will come in as well. I particularly commend this area of inclusion and outreach and the community action that goes on with it, which I know we feel and do so much on, but we need to bring it right into the centre of all our action plans and let it be alongside everything that we do in our Church of England.

Revd Charles Read (Norwich): I too, like Miranda Threlfall-Holmes and others who have spoken, want to commend Sandra Miller and the life events work. As many people here know, my paid employment is to be involved in the training of lay and ordained ministers in the Church, but I am involved in a local church in the Diocese of Norwich, St Catherine’s Mile Cross, in the north end of the city, which is an inner urban part of Norwich. If you have not been to Norwich you might think there are no inner urban parts but we do have quite a few. We have recently appointed a new vicar. In the parish profile, when we listed all the things that go on in our church, we listed out about the pastoral offices, and in the

year 2015 we had 85 funerals in our parish. One of the candidates we interviewed in the first round of interviews, all through the interview process kept asking if we really had 85 funerals and we said, "Yes, we've checked it and that's right". Clearly, this candidate could not get their mind around how you might have 85 funerals in a parish. Some of you will think only 85, I know! Needless to say, that candidate was not appointed. We do now have a very good new vicar, but that is a different story.

As I look around St Catherine's congregation on a Sunday morning, I see quite a number of people who have come to faith or come back into faith through the ministry we exercise, through those pastoral offices which we are now calling apparently "life events", and I think that element of the Church's ministry, as the life events resources show, is a real avenue of opportunity for being with people as they face changes, sometimes traumatic changes in their lives, and as we walk with them.

I am not sure that anybody has been instantaneously converted at a funeral service, although I am willing to be told otherwise, but often these events are stages on the way for people. I am one of those Christians who can tell you exactly when and where I became a Christian. I was 13 years old. It was a Pathfinder weekend away from the church in our village in Shenstone in Staffordshire. It was Cup Final weekend 1973 so you can probably work out the date. Although I can tell you the exact time and place I committed my life to Jesus Christ, I had heard about Jesus before, not least through the work of that Pathfinder group. Even for those of us who can say there was a moment we committed ourselves to Christ, that is in the context often of a whole journey of other things, so I think the life events work is really important.

The Church of England is good at producing Reports that are excellent and then we forget about them. One such is a Report called *On the Way* which came to this Synod even before I first joined it a long time ago. It was drafted by the late and, in my view, much lamented Michael Vasey, the Tutor in Liturgy at St John's College, Cranmer Hall in Durham. What the *On the Way* Report does, or did, is attempt to bring together in conversation liturgical revision, particularly of initiation services, evangelism and nurture courses, such as Alpha and Emmaus, work at helping people to live out their Christian discipleship and a whole raft of ethical issues. It is nice to get all four of those things in conversation.

It very much represents Michael Vasey's great passion to bring worship and mission together. I find in the job that I am paid to do, when I give lectures on worship and mission, that my students are intrigued by this because it never occurred to them that worship could be missional. I think there is a great opportunity here for us to resource local churches and chaplaincies by helping clergy and Readers and other ministers see how worship can be missional. John Wesley said the Eucharist is a converting ordinance, and so are baptisms, weddings and funerals. There are many other life events for which locally we could devise things. I do not mean the Liturgical Commission could devise. This is a good example of how we need to do traditional Church well because it still helps

to introduce people to Jesus Christ. Come to St Catherine's on Sunday morning and you will meet lots of people who will tell you just that.

Revd Paul Hutchinson (York): Point of order. Suspecting you may want to call on the presence of Synod very soon I wonder if I can tempt you to a motion for closure, as Mr Freeman cannot call for one as he has spoken, after the next two speakers.

The Chair: I am very grateful, Mr Hutchinson. After I have heard Mrs Alison Coulter and the Archbishop of York I would welcome a motion for closure. Thank you.

Mrs Alison Coulter (Winchester): I have also had a wonderful afternoon. Thank you very much to all who made that possible. I have two reflections which I would like to give to the Bishops and to the Archbishops' Council as they commit, hopefully, if we vote in favour of this motion, to report back regularly to us.

The first is around *Thy Kingdom Come*. Please keep it simple. The second is around digital evangelism. Please tell our stories.

On the first, keep it simple, I have got a very clear picture in my mind I would like to share with you. My husband was part of the leadership team of a multinational organisation and in his office he had this amazing visual aid, which was a series of wheels of interlocking cogs, if you can imagine those. The one at the top was small, the one at the bottom was quite large. If you moved the one at the top a tiny amount, the one at the bottom went spinning. I think as leaders in an organisation we need to be aware of that, that we make a little change at the top and it can cause the bottom one to spin.

I have to say I have got an interest here because I am a member of the Evangelism Task Group. I think *Thy Kingdom Come* has been a great success. It has been interesting for me, as a member of the Evangelism Task Group and as a member of my own church family - I go to one of the large evangelical churches in Winchester - we are only just getting the message to people now what it is about. We need to keep saying it over and over again.

I would agree with the Bishop of Chelmsford and with Adrian Greenwood, let us keep going with this and let us keep the message going. Let us keep it simple, because what we are asking everybody to do is to pray for five people. I remember the words that Archbishop Justin gave to us, "Talk to Jesus about your friends before you talk to your friends about Jesus". If we could just keep going with that message. Keep it simple; that is my number one request.

My second request is I had a great time in the digital evangelism workshop. Whoever recruited Adrian, well done, he is absolutely fantastic. Thank you to Adrian. Please could we tell the stories of the people of God? Please could we make sure that we carry on doing that; telling the stories of people coming to faith. Tell the stories of Bishops, tell the

stories of clergy, but please tell the stories of all the people of God, and that will be a great inspiration and encouragement to all of us and also be a great witness, a great way of sharing our faith.

Those are my requests. Thank you very much.

The Chair: The Archbishop of York, following which I would welcome a motion for closure, if needed.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd and Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Bishop Christine, members of Synod, just to lay people's anxieties about *Thy Kingdom Come* to rest: an initiative which came out of the Evangelism Task Group supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury and myself, paid for by the Lambeth Partners. He assures me, yes, it will go on until at least 2020. It is not dependent on central funds, so if you really want it to go on beyond that you become a Lambeth Partner, because that is how it is funded. It has done some wonderful things about *Thy Kingdom Come*.

The thing I want to talk about is mentoring, which is absolutely vital. I am almost wanting to share the same reality as the Bishop of Chelmsford. At the age of 10, Jesus Christ became very real to me, praying one night that His life and His grace would flood my life in the morning, finding myself actually having to put right things I had done wrong to my mum, my dad, my brothers, and then the person who led me to Christ, every three months He came to see how I was going on, whether I was reading my Bible, whether I was praying, whether I was witnessing.

I was so eager to tell friends in my school, a Church of England school, some 58 years ago, and in those days there were only two churches really, the Anglican and Roman Catholic and they were always never good to each other, insulting each other. If you wanted to insult an Anglican you called them a Roman Catholic and if you wanted to insult a Roman Catholic you called them an Anglican. These boys in my school, where I was constantly telling them about what had happened to me, "Jesus loves me", they thought one day they would shut me up, so as I was approaching they started shouting out, "Here comes the Pope. Here comes the Pope", and I am still waiting!

I was mentored as a young Christian. When I was 17, there was a big mission in the western part of Uganda, Festo Kivengere was preaching and I was doing the drama and on the final day, when we had about 80,000 through the valleys, he said to me in the morning, "You are the one preaching this morning". I am 17. I mean, I wanted the ground to cover me. But I had watched the big man talk and all he talked about was Jesus Christ, His life, His grace, His mercy, the coming of the Spirit. I preached for about three minutes. I do not have the *Lamb's Book of Life*, I do not know, but all I know is that nearly 20,000 people came forward to be prayed for to receive Christ.

I was mentored. There is nothing that changes our lives like working with somebody who knows what they are doing. That is why in the Northern Province we have got Bishops' Missions. We started in Sheffield, then went to Blackburn and last time we went to Durham. There were 750 missionaries with their Bishops who actually went throughout that diocese. Mentoring is absolutely critical. Find people who can talk the faith, can encourage other people to grow and be more confident in sharing the Gospel.

You have heard me say this before but I will say it again. In this country you people talk a lot about the weather. If every English person talked about Jesus the way they talk about the weather there may be some change. We are not very good because our experiences are not so bubbling with the joy and grace and mercy of God. We find it easier to talk about the weather. Would you please do exactly what the Bishop of Chelmsford was saying. He wants to evangelize you, evangelize me. The reason is are you going to be people who are going to be doing this, sharing the faith with other people, mentoring others, particularly young people? I have been totally, totally amazed.

The only way we are going to get out of a culture of consumerism into a culture of worship, of witness, of grace, of mercy is by actually transferring ourselves from a culture that does not readily talk about Jesus but readily shares Him with other people. Paul says you are saints; saints are people who talk about Jesus and have been transformed by the Holy Spirit, so you and I have a job. If all of this motion is serious, let us be the ambassadors for it and make sure that we do it.

Crabs watched dolphins swim and they admired the way they swam, so they went and said, "Could we learn how to swim?" and they joined the colony. They were learning and after a while they were no longer scuttle, scuttle, scuttle, they were properly swimming. Then they went back to their colony and within three weeks they were scuttle, scuttle, scuttle again. They went and consulted a very great whale, "What's wrong? They taught us how to swim and we go back to our colony. What's wrong?" He said, "You go back to their colony", they went back there and were swimming like dolphins and, lastly, it dawned on them that while they stayed in their old colony the old habits still had the upper hand; moving into a different colony they were able to swim properly.

What is really required of all of us is a culture shift where Christ becomes Lord in everything we do and say where, in fact, on the road like Aidan our plan is sanctuary where we worship God Almighty, refectory where we have got hospitality and feed people, and then on the road and constantly talking about nothing but Jesus. He is such a wonderful Saviour, such a wonderful Lord, and He has given us His great commission and great commandment. Why, Synod, do we not do it all the time? Let us go home and make sure Christ is made known because He is such a wonderful, wonderful Saviour. I have seen His miracles, many, time does not allow me. Please, be a mentor to someone else. Make up your mind, "Who am I going to encourage that they too can be more confident in sharing the faith". May the Lord bless us all.

Revd Paul Hutchinson (York): Point of order: Madam, would you receive a motion for closure on Item 11?

The Chair: I think I see no one standing, but thank you, Mr Hutchinson. I now invite Mr Mark Sheard to respond to the debate. Mark, you have to up to five minutes.

Mr Mark Sheard (ex officio): Thank you very much. How thrilling to hear such positive comment and feedback. I know the team here and the team that has been working on the workshops are enormously encouraged by the feedback that they have received this afternoon, to the extent that Adrian just passed me a £20 note and said for the endorsement that he got that was the bare minimum he would offer, but bids I am sure will be taken later.

Seriously, thank you for the encouragement both on the methodology of the workshops and also on the topics that were covered. I will do my best to answer the points.

Gavin, I am really sorry, they were workshops so they were not videoed. In all the workshops there was loads of information gathered, Post-it notes and so on, so there will be a communication about how the very rich stuff that was gathered and shared this afternoon can best be shared.

I think Archbishop Sentamu covered the fact and reassured people that there will be a *Thy Kingdom Come* in 2018. We heard consistently the value that that has been, so thank you for that.

Thank you, Sally Gaze, Caroline Herbert, Miranda Threlfall-Holmes and probably others who said some specific things about some of the topics.

Thank you for some of the constructive thoughts and approaches too. Peter Kay, your thoughts about other models of family life or rethinking that are really valuable and will be taken on board.

Rosemary, your challenge about what we understand as community is a powerful insight and thank you for that too.

Archdeacon Luke, your thoughts about broadcast and finding more people like you; if the choice is of finding more people like you or more Spurs supporters I think we know which way we would go. I thought you would appreciate that one, Pete. Again, that is a powerful insight and something that needs to be taken on board as we develop the digital approach.

There were some thoughts about partnership as well, about the responsibility of all of us. There was some very practical advice from Anne Martin on hospitality and the role that

can play. I think we have probably all experienced how we have been evangelized, to borrow the Bishop of Chelmsford's thought, just over a meal and so on.

Similarly, Sue Adeney, your thoughts of people running through fields, I am sure they have had echoes on a national platform recently. A tribute to Archdeacon Nikki who is doing that.

Adrian Greenwood, set God's people free, I could not agree more. Mission is the responsibility of all of us; it is indeed for the many and not the few.

The Bishop of Chelmsford's comment about understanding all spiritualities and how relevant they are, Charles Read reminding us that worship can be missional as well, are all powerful contributions to our thinking on this.

John Freeman and Tim Hind were both talking about communication back out to the dioceses. Relying on minutes of this meeting, please do not. I am sure the minutes will be brilliant and they will be published in due course, but the best way of getting this information out and energising people in your dioceses, in your parishes and so on, is go and tell them what you have heard and tell them to get on the websites and have a look and see the good stuff that is available. Do not just rely on the minutes, please.

Then there were one or two thoughts about holding us to account and the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops reporting regularly, as I left it previously. Yes, that is the case but that is part (d) of the motion. I will tell you what, you forfeit the right to do that if you do not do your part under part (c), which is go and do your bit. We are in this together; we are partners in the Gospel, brothers and sisters. Archbishop Sentamu told us that evangelism is vital. Not a single one of us would be stood here today if somebody had not told us about Jesus. Somebody told us; let us go and tell one another. Let us go and evangelize one another. Let us go and evangelize the people that we meet.

Somebody put an estimate out of 15 to 20 million people, opportunities to hear through life events. That is something that only each one of you can do, and that is go and tell the story of what the Lord has done for you. You have that and that is a piece of knowledge that you have that nobody else has. Be confident in that supreme knowledge and go and share it. I move the motion.

The Chair: I now put Item 11 to the vote.

The motion

'That this Synod:

- a) welcome a range of evangelism and growth resources provided by the national church in support of local churches;*

- b) note the progress made to support Life Events ministry since it was commissioned by the Archbishops' Council in 2012;*
- c) agree to encourage dioceses and parishes to engage with these areas of work through prayer and practical action; and*
- d) call on the Archbishops' Council and the House of Bishops to report back to the Synod on a regular basis on the progress of these areas of support.'*

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is very clearly carried. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 5.48 pm

ITEM 12

SPECIAL AGENDA III

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION

CONVERSION THERAPY (GS 2010A AND GS 2070B)

The Chair: Synod, welcome to Item 12 on our agenda, for which you will need GS 2010A and 2070B. A couple of words about the way we are going to structure this debate. As you will have seen from the Order Paper, we have a number of amendments, including that exotic beast, an amendment within an amendment. I will explain a little bit how we are going to do it.

First though can I welcome those who are visitors in the gallery. You are very welcome. It is important that we do our business in public here. I remind visitors that the requirement on you is you remain silent and refrain from any interjections or even any applause. Those who are visitors here are required to be completely silent through the course of our debate.

We do have a plan to be finished by 7 o'clock and that is certainly my firm intention, so I am not looking for extensions to this debate this evening.

Having looked through the various amendments, there are two very large amendments, Items 55 and 56. I think the best way for us to deal with those is that we talk about them within the general debate. So once Jayne Ozanne has introduced the debate we will have a small number of speeches and then I will invite Dr Doherty and Dr Harrison to speak to but not move their amendments. Then we will have some more general

conversation around the subject, probably a good half an hour at least, and then when it looks like we are about half an hour from closing time I will be wanting to move us on to the voting process.

Item 57 is quite complex and we have to have a little debate within a debate. We have to decide Item 57 before we have a final text of 56 on which we vote, if we get that far. Item 58, if we get that far, we will take at the end.

We have had lots of requests to speak. Thank you for that and thank you for being very clear about the sorts of things you want to speak about; that helps us to structure the debate. Once the proposer has opened the batting I am going to immediately move to a three- minute speech limit in order to get in as many as possible of the 50 or so people who have asked to speak. We will not get you all in, apologies for that; we may take other people who intervene from the floor.

Without more ado, Synod, I call upon Ms Jayne Ozanne to open the batting.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): I beg to move

‘That this Synod:

- a) endorse the statement of 16 January 2017 signed by the UK Council for Psychotherapy, The Royal College of General Practitioners and others that the practice of conversion therapy has no place in the modern world, is unethical, harmful and not supported by evidence; and
- b) call upon the Archbishops’ Council to become a co-signatory to the statement on behalf of the Church of England.’

Chair, I would like to thank Synod for enabling this important safeguarding debate. Conversion therapy is best defined as the umbrella term for a type of talking therapy or activity which attempts to change sexual orientation or gender identity. It is unethical, harmful and has no place in the modern world. It is discredited by the Government, the NHS, the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the College of General Practitioners and many other senior healthcare bodies. Indeed, the Department of Health was so concerned about this practice that they brought together for the very first time all the major healthcare bodies to agree a landmark statement condemning conversion therapy - the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding - which Jamie Harrison’s amendment refers to and which I am happy to support, along with Christina Baron’s and Andrew Dotchin’s amendments. Synod, even the Association of Christian Counsellors has publicly condemned conversion therapy.

Alongside this unanimous professional condemnation, we must also listen to the experience of those who have undergone this therapy and testified to its harm. If there

is one thing we must learn as a Church from the horrors highlighted in the Gibb Report, it is that we must take seriously the testimonies of victims of abuse. We must also look to support them in its aftermath. To do otherwise, we have been warned, is to continue to add to their pain and so cause even greater suffering.

Victims of abuse must be heard; their stories should never go unheeded or ignored. If we are humble enough to learn from our mistakes, we will create a safer world where none go through the trauma that some of us have endured. Please let us be clear: conversion therapy is abuse from which vulnerable adults need protecting, and that is why I strongly urge you to resist Sean Doherty's amendment, which I know is well meant but stops us from giving a firm rebuttal to this abhorrent practice.

Whilst I recognise that we have yet to find a way forward in our theological divisions over sexuality, it is beholden on us to ensure that we have adequate safeguards in place to protect those who are at the heart of this debate. This particularly applies to those who are in the process of discovering their sexual orientation or gender identity so that they and we know that the Church is a safe place while they do so.

The January 2017 statement by the healthcare professionals, noted in my motion, makes clear "sexual orientations and gender identities are not mental health disorders, although exclusion, stigma and prejudice may precipitate mental health issues for any person subjected to these abuses". The professionals' concern here is that in treating someone as sick or disordered who wants to change their sexual orientation or gender identity one reinforces the notion that who they are is wrong or sinful. It sets up a hierarchy of identity where being heterosexual and having a gender identity that matches the sex one is born with is seen as superior to other identities.

It is this differentiation that is viewed as being harmful by the medical profession as it leads to stigmatisation and prejudice, which then leads to increased stress amongst those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex or transgender. This increased stress can then lead to significant mental health risks for the LGBTI community which are not faced by the heterosexual community.

Synod may be interested to learn that in a recent online survey I created for the LGBTI community, 217 of the completed 553 responses, i.e. just under 40%, had willingly gone through some form of conversion therapy to try to change their sexual orientation. Amongst these respondents, over two-thirds (68%) stated they had chosen to do so because they believed it to be sinful; 44% said that they had done so because they thought it would be difficult to live out; a third because their church and friends disapproved of their sexual orientation; and a quarter because their church leader disapproved. All this shows that for many of these people the case of stigma and prejudice was a key motivation. What is perhaps most alarming though is that just under half (48%) were 17 or under at the time they started this, with nearly three-quarters (74%) under 20. We are therefore dealing with young vulnerable adults at the very start of their

adult lives who then often carry the impact of this stigma for years and, sadly, for some this proves just too much.

The study, which has many parts, will be published in full shortly. One section involves respondents rating the helpfulness and damage of various types of conversion therapy. Synod will not be surprised to learn that dedicated conversion therapy ministries rated alongside electric shock treatment and deliverance ministry for being most damaging or least helpful, whilst the most helpful was talking to psychotherapists, family and friends.

Synod, given the weight of professional concern, it is shocking to me that some Christians continue to want to defend the practice of conversion therapy, particularly as a hierarchy of human identity is unbiblical. God has created us all equal yet unique. We are each fearfully and wonderfully made. Indeed, there is no sexual underclass in the Kingdom of God. Our challenge is therefore not with who we are, or how we are created, but how we choose to live our lives in holiness and truth.

At this point, I think it is important to be clear about what we mean by the term “sexual orientation”. Academics define it as our innate sexual desire, which is quite separate to any sexual behaviour or activity. As Dr Qazi Rahman, senior lecturer in neuropsychology from King’s College London has explained: “Our innate desire cannot be changed by external factors. We can, of course, try to suppress or hide our orientation and endeavour to adopt a conflicting behaviour because we deem our desire to be wrong. Both suppression and denial are liable to lead to long-term mental health issues”. This, many would argue, then raises the question of sexual fluidity. This certainly does exist, but, as Professors Michael King and Robert Song point out in their briefing note: “Sexual fluidity is associated with natural fluctuations in underlying sexual desire and is not proof in itself that desire can be manipulated by therapy”.

A word now about healing. I, like all of us I hope, believe in a God who heals. Indeed, it was because I believed this that I, like many others, willingly chose to undergo conversion therapy. As such, I received prayer for emotional healing, particularly of key relationships, as well as deliverance ministry and prayer to cut off generational spiritual influences. This was done by kind but mostly professionally unqualified prayer ministry individuals who too wanted to see me healed. The prayer would seemingly work for a few months, even years, and then I would find myself struggling again, ashamed and guilty that it had not worked. I became depressed, wondering why God was not choosing to heal me. As my desperation grew, I turned to look for reasons why the healing did not come. Many sincere Christians, armed with the warped theology of conversion therapy, implied it must be my fault. It led to two breakdowns and two spells in hospital with my body cracking under the stress. My story is sadly not unique.

Dr Emma Foster, affiliated to Teesside University, is delivering a paper today at the Annual Conference of the British Psychological Society Division of Counselling Psychology on this very subject. Her own qualitative research, focusing on a small

sample of participants on the harm of conversion therapy, has concluded that: "The negative impact of reparative therapy was significant and was experienced both physically and mentally as well as during and after the treatment sessions. It resulted in self-harm, suicide attempts and problems with relationships and sexual functioning. The therapy was ineffective in changing their same-sex attraction".

In short, conversion therapy is harmful, dangerous and just does not work. People may be able to alter their behaviour but they can never alter their innate desire. It has taken me a lifetime to accept I am who I am and it is this truth that the health professionals are keen to help us all accept, no matter how much we may wish otherwise. As is said in the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding: "This is not intended to discourage clients with conflicted feelings around sexuality seeking help; psychological therapists routinely work with people who are struggling with inner conflict. Affirmative counselling is key. Anything else, no matter how well intentioned, is usually ineffective, although it may help in altering behaviour".

This debate may seem to some to be a complex and confusing one. The calls for more scientific evidence and proof of harm are a smokescreen. Please know it is rare for randomised control samples to show evidence of harm as it would take several years of careful monitoring. In addition, it is highly unlikely that any reputable ethics committee would ever give approval for a trial of a treatment they strongly suspect, due to the many testimonial reports, to be harmful.

This debate is actually quite simple. Do we trust our medical health professionals and academics, including many sincerely godly Christians, to know what they are talking about? Should we listen to the voices of those we and others have unwittingly harmed? Should we learn from our mistakes and seek to protect future generations from the sort of damage that was done to me and so many others? All the medical professionals are in one accord and I urge you, please, to support this motion standing in my name.

The Chair: Thank you. This item is now open for debate. Let us begin with Dr Simon Clift, followed by Miss Fenella Cannings-Jurd, please.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Dr Simon Clift (Winchester): Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my reflections. Some of the examples of conversion therapy that we can read about and see on YouTube are truly jaw-dropping and toe-curling, and so who would not want to support this motion in order to protect vulnerable people from unethical and unprincipled practices? But as Christian leaders elected to Synod to discern God's wisdom in such matters, we are not called simply to fall in line with public opinion or even a statement such as the one before us from expert health professionals - and I speak as a health professional myself - without further reflection.

Preparing to serve as missionaries within the Anglican Church of Tanzania during our cross-cultural mission studies, we were invited to consider the seminal work of Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, first published in 1951. He presents five different views on the possible relationship between Gospel and culture. I remember my heart warming to the idea of Christ above culture, holding up the Tanzanian culture with my Tanzanian brothers and sisters to the light of the Gospel with a view to ultimately seeing its transformation. I would argue that the same approach is called for here, so with courage and wisdom we critique and challenge prevailing views for the sake of the Gospel.

As Synod, I suspect we will all recognise the fundamental importance of faith and beliefs in shaping our conduct and attitudes in the realm of our sexuality and how those firmly-held beliefs are, at times, painfully at odds with our feelings and desires. Where such a conflict arises, and in particular where this leads to significant distress and even dysphoria, what should our response be as a Church?

I ask us to consider two examples of Christians who hold current teaching on the Church matters of human sexuality. Consider a married man with a wife and children, increasingly struggling with unwanted same-sex erotic desires, or a 19-year-old woman, brought up in a Christian home, who is deeply disturbed by her sexual desires for both men and women. Surely one legitimate option in both situations would be for such individuals to seek the input of appropriately trained therapists who can sensitively and respectfully enable them to address these desires in order to diminish them. Therefore I urge Synod to continue to affirm and support such individuals by not supporting the motion as it currently stands. Thank you.

Miss Fenella Cannings-Jurd (Salisbury): In October 2016, YouGov released a poll saying that 38% of 18 to 24 years old thought that churches were not hospitable to gay people. Now, Synod, I have to confess I am among that 38%. This is not to say that there are no wonderfully welcoming, affirming and inclusive churches in this nation, but rather that, as a collective church, as the Church of England, we are inhospitable to LGBTQI people. We are inhospitable because in 2017 we are seriously debating the relative pros and cons of condemning conversion therapy; we are seriously debating therapy that seeks to change people's God-given identities. We are seriously inhospitable because whilst we debate and reflect and consider, important as all of that is, young people continue to see us as doing nothing. Worse, if this motion is rejected, they see us as actively endorsing behaviour that is, by and large, seen as a violation of basic human rights.

How do we expect to convince the young people within our Church - myself included - of the powerfully loving, redemptive message of Christ if we cannot even bring ourselves to condemn the therapies that undermine this love? If we cannot convince those few young people within our Church that this Church preaches the love and redemption of Jesus Christ, if we cannot convince those few young people already brought to Christ by the work and the worship of the Church of England, then what chance do we stand with the millions of young people in this country who do not already believe, those who we seek

to mission to, the millions of young people for whom acceptance of LGBTQI people is a given? How can we teach the love of Christ if we ourselves are not living out this love? Thank you.

The Chair: After Sally Gaze I am going to invite Dr Sean Doherty to speak to, but not move, his amendment and, after him, I am going to invite Dr Jamie Harrison; ditto. Again, for all of this we are still on the three minute speech limit, folks.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): I actually intend to speak for the amendment. Do you still wish me to go ahead?

The Chair: This is a general debate. Feel free to speak about any matter that is under this debate.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): There is no sense in which I wish us, as Synod, to say that the abusive practices within conversion therapy as we usually have understood it are okay. They are obviously not okay and I am sure all of us would wish to condemn them.

But the note from the Secretary General as we have it uses and quotes that conversion therapy is something very, very broadly defined, something that could include even if somebody asks me to pray with them about changing their sexual desires, somebody perhaps who is married and asks me to pray for them. I, as a parish priest, have often prayed with people for things that I do not think are necessarily going to happen. I have been asked to pray for raising the dead, for example, and I did pray for that to happen. I believe that even though it did not happen it was an important part of that person's journey to reconciling themselves to that death that I was able to pray with them in that way. I am reluctant for us to vote for something that does not give us the freedom to respond to people's requests for prayer in that way.

I want to vote for the amendment because it does show respect for the views of the professional bodies but without speaking as if we are one of them. If you look at the people who have affirmed this, they are speaking as people who offer professional therapy. We, as the Church of England, are mainly amateurs. We are amateurs in the sense that we love and we come alongside people not mainly as professionals but mainly as friends and as brothers and sisters in Christ. I do not think we should be acting like professionals on something that we do not know so much about.

I also want to vote for the amendment because it talks theologically, and that is something that we do know something about, and it does talk about our sexuality as being affected - all of our sexualities being affected - by the Fall, and not one being superior to another, which is speaking to the heart of why this motion was put in the first place. I believe the amendment is more specific about what it is that we are seeking to avoid in our own

pastoral practices and talks specifically about what we want to do rather than just giving a general condemnation.

The Chair: Thank you. You are finished.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): Okay. Thank you. I have finished.

Revd Dr Sean Doherty (London): Thank you, Chair. I want to thank Jayne Ozanne for raising this important matter in Synod and for her gracious acknowledgment that my amendment is well-intentioned. Let me be clear, I am opposed to conversion therapy and, I trust, so is my amendment. I have criticised conversion therapy heavily in print and online.

So why do I want to amend this motion? First, there has been a flurry of letters and emails trying to convince us one way or another with respect to the scientific evidence, but when it comes to gender identity especially the scientific community itself is divided, which is why the Royal College of Psychiatrists has not signed this statement. For this reason, if no other, I do not think we can support this motion as it stands. If my amendment falls, I would be very pleased to support Jamie Harrison's.

Like me, most of us in the room are simply not qualified to assess the scientific evidence, and it would be divisive and messy to try to do so on the floor of Synod, so paragraph (a) of my amendment allows us to note - to recognise - what these professional bodies have said without needing to judge it for ourselves.

Paragraph (b), however, then deliberately echoes what is absolutely theologically right about the statement, namely that all sexuality is affected by the Fall. I agree absolutely with Jayne, there is no hierarchy, heterosexuality is just as fallen as homosexuality. Straight is not better than gay. None of us have any moral high ground. So my amendment explicitly rules out therapy or pastoral care which assumes that it is better to be straight than gay. Paragraph (b) defines precisely what the problem with conversion therapy is and rules it out on a theological rather than a disputed scientific basis.

To my mind, the original motion does not go far enough. The original motion speaks only of conversion therapy and says nothing about ministry within the Church. Paragraph (c) then explicitly rules out not just conversion therapy but bad pastoral practice as well.

Given that these practices, though, such as prayer, ministry and pastoral care, are not wrong, but can be conducted in such damaging ways, how are we to know what is good and bad practice? That brings us to paragraph (d). I very much share Jayne's concerns about safeguarding. This is a brief debate on something which has a profound impact on the lives of gay people. If we endorse or sign this statement as it is, that is the end of the matter. Again, the original motion does not go far enough, so paragraph (d) of my

amendment asks that we should ask for further guidance from the House of Bishops as to what would be good and bad practice so that this is not the end of the matter.

To summarise, my amendment: (a) notes the dominant medical opinion; (b) rules out therapy based on the erroneous assumption that straight is better than gay; (c) broadens the scope of the motion to include pastoral practice; and (d) ensures that this is not the end of the matter. I therefore commend it to you. Thank you.

The Chair: After Dr Harrison we will be continuing with some general debate. There will be time for perhaps another four or five speeches before we start moving to formally proposing the amendment. If you are wanting to get your word in, it would be a good idea to stand after Dr Harrison has given his speech, otherwise, if you want to come in at the end, you are dicing with fire.

Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham): Mr Chairman, thank you. My amendment offers to the Synod the option to endorse the concerns that we have heard raised but not via the 2017 statement of Jayne, which she has given us, but rather via the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK which I hope you have had a chance to see in one form or another. This deals specifically with conversion therapy in relation to sexual orientation only and such psychological therapies that impose questions, of course, of ethics and of potential harm, as we have heard. Of course, between us we have received much advice on the matter in the last few days. It should be noted that the 2015 MoU, as I will call it, recognised, and I quote, that: "This position is not intended to discourage clients with conflicted feelings around sexuality [to seek] help". To my mind, it does not preclude trained and regulated therapists offering careful conversation in the context of empathy, confidentiality and informed consent.

The 2017 statement, again in Jayne's motion, includes gender identity as well as sexual orientation. I suggest that these two are separate categories and demand separate consideration. It has already been pointed out how complex and contested this arena is. The 2017 statement speaks of "harm" rather than "potential harm" and I think also distorts by a focus on intentionality. As we have already heard from Simon and others, it is noteworthy that the Royal College of Psychiatrists chose not to sign the 2017 statement, I understand through lack of convicted evidence that there is a proven harm in this area. The evidence base was not strong enough.

I want to suggest to Synod that should we wish to endorse something then the document that we should be endorsing would be the 2015 rather than the 2017 statement.

My amendment also deletes Jayne's subparagraph (b). Of course, I speak as a member of Archbishops' Council but not on its behalf. I do worry about the competency and capability of the Council to pass judgment on evidence presented in this rather technical and complex area. We heard this morning of thematic Working Groups being set up, not least that of Bishop Sarah Mullally on social and biological sciences, and we pray that

that work and particular group's work will be fruitful, informative, not too tardy, and will help us in this very important context. My new section (b) acknowledges the importance of gender identity in contemporary culture so that, together as a Church, we are sensitive, receptive and in listening mode.

Of course, should you either pass Jayne's motion unamended or the amendment to my amendment, I will of course take very seriously the question of signing something as part of the Council, but I want to be cautious. I would rather go with 2015 than 2017, but, as I say, I am very happy to go with the Synod's mind and do the best I can.

Revd Lisa Battye (Manchester): I am speaking as an accepting evangelical. I want to see the full inclusion of gay people in the Church. I am very pro that. I am also trained in counselling and in advanced psychoanalysis in group work. That has made considering this a funny mix for me.

Out of my considerations I have come to the conclusion that our best course of action today will be to note the January statement to remind our people that any care we offer needs to respect others' needs and must not involve coercion or manipulation or make unwarranted promises, but I do not think we should interject an ideological critique to the work of other caring professions that most of us do not know enough about and which are not asking for our help. I think the wording of Sean's amendment is the right offering regarding the work of safeguarding of gay people in our Church and I commend that amendment to us today.

Revd Angus MacLeay (Rochester): Clearly there is uncertainty about the science, but the Scriptures are clear: we have to be guided by the truth of God's word. We also need to recognise that we certainly must root out bad practice where people are coerced or pressurised. We must constantly be guided by grace and love, and therefore it is grace and truth together in all pastoral practice that we must aspire to.

My key concern with the proposed resolution, though, is some of the underlying assumptions. If we were to go to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, reading from the NIV, it says: "Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God?" Who are they? Well, the Apostle goes on and says: "Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor [the] drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God".

The Apostle covers all sorts of sinful behaviour, certainly not prioritising one over the others. But how does he proceed? This is the key point. "And that is what some of you were..." It highlights that the congregation in Corinth included many who had previously been involved in all of the various behaviours listed, yet through the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ they had been washed clean, set apart, put right with God. In other words, the marks of the Gospel of Christ are: radical Christian inclusion; all are welcome to enter Christ's Kingdom, come as you are; and radical Christian change, all are called to change

through the work of the Cross of Christ and the indwelling spirit. We are not, none of us, to stay as we are.

1 Corinthians is about the holiness, the set apartness of the Church and the affirmation of our bodies as the arena in which holiness is worked out, and yet that call, not just for radical Christian inclusion but also radical Christian change, is missing. That is what needs to be heard in all our debates in these areas. Thank you.

The Bishop of Liverpool (Rt Revd Paul Bayes): As the world listens to us today, the world needs to hear us say that LGBTI orientation and identity is not a crime, not a sickness and not a sin. We must distinguish between an aesthetic and a therapeutic approach. In the Church, we are certainly called to help one another to conform our lives to Jesus Christ and to live lives of holiness, but we do not need to engage people in healing therapy if they are not sick.

We disagree, friends, about the way forward for LGBTI people who want to live in holiness. Some here, Angus for one, will insist that celibacy is the only way. Others here, including me, would want to offer the choice of celibacy or a faithful, permanent, stable relationship to LGBTI people, just as we routinely offer it to heterosexual and cisgender people in our Church, but these disagreements are not at issue today. What matters here is that a therapeutic model is not appropriate if LGBTI orientation identity is not a sickness. If the Church suggests that really, actually, it is, then our many statements opposing homophobia are cancelled and the world will think that in fact we really do believe LGBTI people to be second-class humans, no matter how they behave. This is not acceptable to me and, I hope, not to this Synod. That is why I will vote for this motion, or for Jamie's amendment if the Synod prefers it.

Later this month at home we will celebrate Liverpool Pride, with which I am privileged and proud to be associated. We celebrate Pride later than most people because of the death of Michael Causer, an 18-year-old gay man who died in August 2008 following a brutal homophobic attack. He did not die because he was sick or sinful or because he had committed a crime. He died because he was hated, in a culture where that hate was ignored or avoided or tolerated or fed. We, the Church, must seize every opportunity to say that we will not have a culture in which such hate can find purchase and to say that all people need help to live lives of holiness but that no one needs to be ashamed or cured of their orientation or identity and that it is spiritually abusive to suggest that they do.

I exhort Synod to vote for this motion and I exhort the Archbishops' Council to respond positively to the motion's request.

The Chair: Thank you. After Kate Wharton, I would like to hear from Mr Ed Cox for a maiden speech, I believe.

Revd Canon Kate Wharton (Liverpool): Thank you, Chair. I am certain, of course, that all of us would agree that this is a vitally important subject, but it is really important that we are careful about what we say and do on this subject. The world is watching.

Some of the scenarios which are discussed and outlined in this motion and the attached paper are, of course, deeply problematic. There are certain approaches and practices which would come under the banner of conversion therapy which are obviously completely abhorrent and entirely unacceptable.

This motion draws on advice from highly respected professional bodies, such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, and it also quotes debates which have been held in the House of Commons. On the face of it then, it seems that reason, compassion, scientific and therapeutic guidance and sheer common sense would all suggest that this motion must be supported.

However, much as I wish to stand against any form of conversion therapy which is harmful or manipulative or dangerous or which wrongly treats a person's sexual identity as a sin or a disorder, I find that I cannot support this unamended motion. There is, I fear, a lack of clarity and nuance.

In April, Jayne Ozanne gave a talk at a gathering of the Royal College of Psychiatrists entitled *Spiritual Abuse: The Next Great Scandal for the Church*. In that presentation Jayne discussed what she called the "charismatic leader" and "charismatic tribe model" and made particular reference to Alpha, the Evangelical Alliance, Spring Harvest and New Wine, including showing a photograph claiming to be of New Wine but which was not. I must at this point declare an interest since I am one of two assistant national leaders of New Wine. I do not, of course, deny that in some parts of the charismatic church mistakes have been made in the past, lessons have been learned and will continue to be learned, but I simply do not recognise the description given of the charismatic tribe and I find the casual link between outlining charismatic ministry practices and condemning spiritually abusive practices to be tenuous and unfair.

I do not feel it is possible to support this unamended motion as it stands because it is too open to misinterpretation and misunderstanding and, I believe, risks taking us in the wrong direction. I am deeply concerned of the unintended consequences were this to pass unamended. Will I find myself in a situation at New Wine, in my church, in conversation, where someone confides in me and I offer prayer, only to find myself later accused of something else?

I am unable to support the motion unamended, but I will be supporting Sean Doherty's amendment and urge others to do the same. I believe this enables us to rightly speak out against harmful and dangerous forms of conversion therapy without unwittingly condemning all forms of charismatic prayer and ministry at the same time. It provides

helpful nuance to the original motion and therefore means we can critique and condemn what is harmful without also condemning or sidelining what have been - and remain - integral facets of Christian pastoral ministry.

The Chair: Thank you. After Mr Ed Cox, I will be inviting Dr Sean Doherty to formally move the amendment that stands in his name.

Mr Edward Cox (Church of England Youth Council): Thank you, Chair, for calling me forward for my maiden speech, and thank you to Jayne for bringing this forward to Synod.

I would like to start off by announcing myself, as Christine Hardman put it earlier, as a bit defective of the norm, but I would also like to announce myself as a scientist. Please do not start clinging to science when it suits you. Please do not start looking for it and answers in it when you have ignored it before. May I also add that age does not equal experience. Experience equals experience. I am speaking as somebody who has struggled with same-sex attraction, who has been gay, who is queer, whichever term you choose to use. I may not have 40 years of ministry and 14 books behind me but I have that.

Earlier, Justin Welby spoke of the importance of seeing people and making sure that they are treasured, that they are loved, that they are valued, but all too often this has not occurred for LGBTQI people. My personal experience was that my same-sex attraction was rooted in my poor relationship with my father, it was a lifestyle choice, it was a phase, it was experimenting, and it needed prayer; if God would just bless me it would go away. This fundamentally says: "You are wrong". My view of myself was that I was made wrong. Two years ago I was diagnosed with severe depression because of this. This kind of therapy is emotionally, mentally and spiritually abusive. So please, Synod, pass this motion. Thank you.

ITEM 55

The Chair: Dr Doherty, just the three little words.

Revd Dr Sean Doherty (London): I beg to move

'Leave out everything after "That this Synod:" and insert-

- "(a) note the statement of 16 January 2017 signed by the UK Council for Psychotherapy, the Royal College of General Practitioners and others concerning the practice of conversion therapy;
- (b) affirm that all sexuality is equally affected by the Fall and that therefore Christian therapies and pastoral practices which assume otherwise are not warranted;

- (c) affirm that pastoral care, prayer ministry and professional counselling are legitimate means of supporting individuals who choose them freely, provided that they respect the proper dignity of human beings and do not involve coercion or manipulation or make unwarranted promises about the removal of unwanted feelings; and
- (d) as the House of Bishops to draw up guidelines for work in this area to discourage inappropriate pastoral practices, and to encourage good ones.”

I do so move.

Revd Bertrand Olivier (London): Point of order: could we have a vote by Houses, please?

The Chair: Well, we have not had the debate yet. The next thing I have to do is to invite Ms Ozanne to comment on Dr Doherty’s amendment. She has up to two minutes to do so.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Thank you, Chair, and, thank you, Bertrand, for later. Synod, I urge you to strongly resist this statement, which is completely different to the motion that I originally tabled and could be a different motion for a different day.

My primary concern is that it only notes that conversion therapy is unethical and potentially harmful and, therefore, carries no sense of approval or endorsement to either of the two statements. Are we really going to say to the world that we do not want to endorse what our medical professionals and academics, who are of one accord, are telling us on this? Or, indeed, listen to testimonies such as Ed, a very powerful testimony, of what abuse he and others have suffered?

The strength of opposition and the views expressed in the communications you have received in the run-up to Synod show the mindset of those who want this practice to continue - and we have heard it also in speeches - and why, therefore, my Private Member’s Motion is so urgently needed. This is the world I grew up in and I know so well and one I found so hard to come out into. It is what motivates me to ensure that we have the right protections in place for other vulnerable adults.

We are, indeed, all affected by the Fall but some of us are evidently more affected than others. We do not pray for people to become gay. I would suggest that the House of Bishops’ Pastoral Advisory Group has already committed itself for drawing up guidelines on this, and that is where this is best done.

Sadly, this very sincere, well-meant wrecking motion from those who still do not seem to understand the deep trauma that conversion therapy causes is behind this, and I do urge you to resist it, please.

The Chair. Debate on Item 55 is now open. I am hoping this is not going to be a particularly lengthy debate, maybe just a couple of speeches of two minutes' length.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Like Sean and Kate and Jayne, I am no lover of conversion therapy, and I am sure the vast majority of members of this Synod, but I think we ought to resist Sean's amendment, although we have talked about it and I understand what drives him. I want us to endorse not note.

Sean has pointed out that we are not experts, but as an ethicist he is perfectly able to make judgments about the truth of various things on the basis of secular ethical thinking, so why can we not exercise that same judgment ourselves as Synod?

I want to endorse not note because I believe, like Jayne and like Ed, that there are some in our Church who are causing harm to others. Jayne has said so, Ed has said so. I feel terrified sometimes when I go to an EGGS meeting because of what I am likely to face.

Gibb told us that one of the dangers of our culture is that we excuse people because they are doing good work. I do not want there to be any comfort for the perpetrators of abuse over this matter and no comfort for those who think that a few depressed or suicidal gays is a price worth paying for their own particular pastoral approach. This needs to be resisted. Sean is absolutely right. I wish we could divide his motion into two because I love (c) and (d), but because he does not endorse but only notes I have to resist it.

The Chair. After Dr Appleby, I think I would be interested in a motion for closure on this amendment.

Dr John Appleby (Newcastle): This motion, which I signed, addresses one major issue with which there are three consequent problems.

First, the word 'conversion' implies in this case a change of nature or identity and not a viewpoint or ideas and, therefore, is in conflict with the valuing of our God-given nature.

Secondly, 'therapy' implies some sort of disorder, which is also wrong as an individual's sexual orientation or identity is not a disorder. Thus, conversion therapy is doubly and fundamentally at odds with our acceptance of people in all their diversity.

This motion is not against counselling to help come to terms with sexuality or to help deal with unwanted desires. Therefore, counselling is relevant to single and married, straight and gay. If someone is deeply distressed, then therapy - and I mean therapy - may help deal with that distress, which is a problem.

The third problem with this issue concerns the genuine freedom of choice, a problem in all contexts where we must always be careful. The last point is to say that requiring

something to be described as harmful only when it is always harmful is unrealistic.

We now accept the statement that smoking is bad for your health. We do not insist that we say it is bad for 80% of those sampled, we just accept the statement. However, whether we say 'harmful' or 'can be harmful', I would urge you to support the motion.

The Chair: Point of order, Mr Freeman.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Mr Chairman, motion for closure on Item 55.

The Chair: That would have my approval. The motion is for closure on Item 55. Does it have Synod's approval?

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

The Chair: Item 55 now comes to the vote. Sir?

Revd Bertrand Olivier (London): Can we have a vote by Houses, please?

The Chair: A vote by Houses, yes, if 25 of you will stand to request that.

The vote on Item 55: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 10, against 26, with 2 recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 64 in favour, 110 against, with 2 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 88 in favour, 97 against, with 6 recorded abstentions. The motion

'Leave out everything after "That this Synod:" and insert-

- "(a) note the statement of 16 January 2017 signed by the UK Council for Psychotherapy, the Royal College of General Practitioners and others concerning the practice of conversion therapy;*
- (b) affirm that all sexuality is equally affected by the Fall and that therefore Christian therapies and pastoral practices which assume otherwise are not warranted;*
- (c) affirm that pastoral care, prayer ministry and professional counselling are legitimate means of supporting individuals who choose them freely, provided that they respect the proper dignity of human beings and do not involve coercion or manipulation or make unwarranted promises about the removal of unwanted feelings; and*
- (d) as the House of Bishops to draw up guidelines for work in this area to discourage inappropriate pastoral practices, and to encourage good ones."*

was lost in all three Houses.

ITEM 56

The Chair. We move on now to Item 56 and I invite Dr Harrison to utter the three magic words.

Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham): I beg to move

‘*Leave out* everything after “That this Synod:” and *insert-*

- (a) endouse the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK of November 2015, signed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists and others, that the practice of gay conversion therapy has no place in the modern world, is unethical, potentially harmful and not supported by evidence; and
- (b) call upon the Church to be sensitive to, and to listen to, contemporary expressions of gender identity.”

I so move.

The Chair. I would now like to invite Jayne Ozanne to comment on Dr Harrison’s amendment. She has up to two minutes. She will not get a chance to comment on Christina Baron’s amendment to the amendment, so if she wants to do that she needs to incorporate that into her time.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): I am happy to support Jamie’s amendment, should Synod wish to do so. The 2015 Memorandum of Understanding was signed by 17 professional organisations, including the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the Association of Christian Counsellors. It is primarily a code of practice for practitioners, but it is equally valid for us as it shows what we should be aspiring to in terms of best practice as a Church.

The issue regarding the Royal College of Psychiatrists is a complex one regarding the transgender issue. I would say that the World Professional Association for Transgender Health have put out a statement saying that the stigma attached to gender non-conformity can lead to prejudice and discrimination, just as it does for lesbian, gay and bisexual people and, therefore, they are very concerned about conversion therapy. However, I think Jamie Harrison’s part (b), which says that we need to learn more about this, is

something that we should attend to at this time.

My key concern is, actually, that we do endorse Christina Baron's amendment to the amendment which retains the element of signing. It is incredibly important that we do this as the Church of England. First, because it is a public declaration of our position, so there is no confusion amongst our members or, indeed, the general public as to where we stand. Secondly - and this is very important - because it puts us at the forefront of involving other religious organisations in this important debate. By leading in this critical area of safeguarding, we will hopefully encourage other faiths and Christian denominations to take a similar stance. There, this issue is even more pronounced with many being sent home to their native countries amongst minority ethnics for corrective rape practices.

Finally, it will ensure the Church a seat at the table alongside the Government and all the other signatories for future debates and work on this important topic. I know there is more to come in the future and they would like us to be involved. So, please, support both amendments. Thank you.

ITEM 57

The Chair. I am now going to call on Christina Baron to speak to and move her amendment. She has, again, a maximum of two minutes, after which, as we spent most of our time on general conversation and general debate, I am going to be looking for a motion for closure without any further debate, if that has the mind of Synod.

Ms Christina Baron (Bath and Wells): I beg to move

'At the end, *insert-*

"(-) call on the Archbishops' Council to become a co-signatory, on behalf of the Church of England, to the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding, subject to the agreement of the current co-signatories."

I was robbed, I was told I would have three minutes. This amendment asks the Archbishops' Council to sign the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding. I hope you have all seen it. It was emailed and it is on the notice board outside, if you want to nip out very quickly and read it.

The agreement of the current signatories will be required if you wanted to add our signature and that is provided for in my amendment. Someone said to me, "Are not all the other bodies which have signed health bodies?" Well, no, the Scottish Government has signed and, indeed, Relate - formally the Marriage Guidance Council - which has a lot of similarities with us in a way, they do employ unpaid counsellors who have had training and so I think there is a certain similarity there.

The undertaking says, “A shared commitment to protecting the public from the risks of conversion therapy”. There is no good evidence that it works, and evidence that it has the potential to cause harm. The Church of England has been seen in the past often as unwelcoming to lesbians and gays. Passing this amendment would go some way to correcting that impression, and the Church of England would be taking a lead. Our Church, the Church for all the people of England, would be taking a lead in good pastoral care for people whom we have often let down.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order.

The Chair: Mr Freeman, I need to allow Dr Harrison to respond to the debate. It was my mistake but if you would be standing ready in a moment.

Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham): Yes, I obviously said I was cautious about the Council being asked to do this within its competency and capability, but I would like the Synod to, obviously, decide for us.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: that motion that 57 now be put to the Synod.

The Chair: That has my agreement. This is a motion for closure on Item 57, which is Christina Baron’s amendment to Jamie’s Harrison amendment. Are you minded to go for closure?

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

The Chair: That is very clearly carried. We now go directly to the vote on 57, on Christina Baron’s amendment.

A Speaker: Point of order. Can we have a vote by Houses on the amendment to the amendment?

The Chair: That is allowed if 25 of you are requiring that. Yes, there are. So, once again, a vote by Houses on 57, the amendment to Dr Harrison’s amendment.

The vote on Item 57: In the House of Bishops, in favour 16, against 16, with 5 recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 117 in favour, 46 against, with 12 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 108 in favour, 73 against, with 11 recorded abstentions. It has not passed because it has not passed in the House of Bishops. A tie does not constitute a pass. The motion

‘At the end, insert-

“(-) call on the Archbishops’ Council to become a co-signatory, on behalf of

the Church of England, to the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding, subject to the agreement of the current co-signatories.”

was lost in all three Houses.

The Chair: We revert to Item 56 as unamended, but I think we have probably debated enough and if my friends want to propose a motion of closure?

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order, Mr Chairman. I propose a motion for closure on Item 56.

The Chair: A motion for closure on Item 56. That has my agreement. Has it the agreement of Synod?

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

The Chair: We, therefore, move to a vote on Item 56.

A Speaker: Point of order. Could we have a vote by Houses, please?

The Chair: As before, if there are 25 people standing for that we shall. Those who wish to stand for a vote by Houses? It is your supper time. There are 25 standing. Once again, on Item 56 we are moving to a vote by Houses. Thank you.

The vote on Item 56: In the House of Bishops, in favour 35, against 1, with 2 recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, in favour 142, against 25, with 7 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 165 in favour, 20 against, with 5 recorded abstentions. This motion

‘Leave out everything after “That this Synod:” and insert-

(a) endorse the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK of November 2015, signed by the Royal College of Psychiatrists and others, that the practice of gay conversion therapy has no place in the modern world, is unethical, potentially harmful and not supported by evidence; and

(b) call upon the Church to be sensitive to, and to listen to, contemporary expressions of gender identity.”

was carried in all three Houses.

The Chair: Synod, I am going to ask you for the thing I really promised I was not going to: Can we have another quarter of an hour and just finish off this business tonight? I really would not want this to have to stand adjourned and deal with it again at a later date.

I am proposing we extend this session by a maximum of 15 minutes so that we can get through Mr Dotchin's amendment and any final votes.

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

ITEM 58

The Chair. Mr Dotchin, would you like to move your amendment. You have, I am afraid, just two minutes. We are really tight.

Revd Andrew Dotchin (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I beg to move

'At the end, *insert-*

"(-) call on the Government to ban the practice of Conversion Therapy."

What can I say, Chair, but, trust me, I am a vicar. Synod, in proposing the amendment to call on the Government to ban the practice of conversion therapy, I expect we will find it welcomed by Parliament. There have already been several debates within the Houses as to whether such a ban should be imposed and there is still much pressure amongst MPs to enact such a ban. As long ago as November 2013 in an Early Day Motion, MP Sandra Osborne found MPs across the House united in calling for a ban on conversion therapy for under 18s. This led to the signing of the landmark 2015 Memorandum of Understanding, which we have just concurred with.

The second debate on 3 November 2015 by Conservative MP Mike Freer again expressed concern that it remained possible for people to be referred to NHS practitioners for gay conversion therapy. The Under-Secretary of State for Health assured members that we would eradicate that.

By accepting my amendment, Synod will help the Government go ahead and put into practice a ban that members on both sides of the House have asked for and would be welcomed by them. If countries such as Taiwan and Malta, a fiercely Catholic country, as well as various states in the USA, can ban conversion therapy, then, surely, so can we.

My personal concern though is the threat to the life that the very idea of conversion therapy brings to vulnerable, young LGBTI people. I still weep over the suicide of Lizzie Lowe and I would be horrified if another rainbow child of God took their life because the Church allowed even the remotest possibility for them to be abused. This must not happen. I urge you to support my amendment so that we can send a very clear and loud signal to our LGBTI members and the watching world that we find this practice abhorrent and we want it ended.

The Chair: Jayne Ozanne, as the proposer of the main motion, to respond. A maximum of a minute, Jayne.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): Andrew, thank you so much for tabling this amendment, which I gladly accept, as it takes the motion one step further and puts us in a place of leading rather than following on this important safeguarding issue. As he has correctly pointed out, there have been continued calls from MPs and the Prime Minister herself has said she is open to reviewing this.

It does seem strange to me that we have not already done so, given Malta and Taiwan's lead. We know this practice still goes on in the UK and it is something that is putting vulnerable lives at risk, as Andrew has pointed out. Please, do vote for this if you feel led.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 58.

The Chair: That is a motion for closure on Item 58. It is not usual that we do that without any speeches, but I get a sense that we have aired matters quite thoroughly this afternoon, Synod. No? The Archbishop, sorry, after which I may be interested in Mr Freeman again.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Members of Synod, and Chair, only the Holy Spirit converts. I am sure that the suggestion that somebody should use some technique to convert another and then continue healing is theologically unsound, so the sooner the practice of so-called conversion therapy is banned I can sleep at night. So let us encourage the Government to do it.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order, Chair: motion for closure on Item 58.

The Chair: For reasons adduced earlier, that would have my approval, but, Synod, it is up to you.

The motion was put and carried on a show of hands

The Chair: That is clearly carried. Item 58 is now closed and we come to vote on it.

Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester): Could I ask for a vote by Houses?

The Chair: Are there 25 members of Synod standing? There are. Therefore, we will indeed have a vote by Houses.

The vote on Item 58: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 28, against 2, with 5 recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 121 in favour, 34 against, with 16 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 120 in favour, 52 against, with 18 recorded

abstentions. The motion

'At the end, insert-

"(-) call on the Government to ban the practice of Conversion Therapy."

was carried in all Houses.

The Chair: That brings us back, believe it or not, to debate on the main motion, but I do wonder, Mr Freeman?

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on this item.

The Chair: I cannot hear you but it has my approval. Does it have the approval of Synod?

The motion was put and carried on a show of hands

The Chair: That is clearly carried. The debate is closed on Item 12 as amended by Item 55 and Item 58. It is now for Ms Ozanne to reply to the debate, a maximum of one minute, please.

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): I am sure Synod will understand that I cannot reply to everybody, but thank you for all your speeches and for the tone of this debate, which I think has been a model for others.

Yesterday I had a letter passed to me from a 90 year-old priest who has told me that I can share. I will not read you the whole letter. He is a homosexual celibate priest who has been through every form of therapy there is. It is an horrific story of electric shock treatments and lithium treatments. I will let you read his book when it comes out. He ends with this: "I hope with all my heart that your Private Member's Motion asking the Synod that such treatment is unethical and harmful as it does not work will now be accepted. May God support you in all your endeavours to bring about an end once and for all to the Church's homophobia in all its forms which have throughout the ages caused so much misery and suffering to countless thousands of people who were made in the image of God".

Please, for this gentleman and countless others, will you give this motion full support? Thank you.

The Chair: We now then move to a vote on the substantive motion as amended.

Mr Jacob Vince (Chichester): Point of order: may I ask for a vote by Houses?

The Chair: You may indeed. If 25 members are standing, we shall have another vote by

Houses.

While the count is being transcribed, just a reminder again, Synod, that we receive the results of votes in silence, and another reminder that once this debate is over, of course there is worship taking place imminently here in the hall so please stay for that. Can I thank you for the way in which this debate has been conducted. It has been quite a complex one and I am very grateful for the way in which members have spoken and the helpful procedural motions that have enabled us to get through our business in just a quarter of an hour longer than I had hoped.

The vote on Item 12: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 36 in favour, against 1, with no recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 135 in favour, 25 against, with 13 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 127 in favour, 48 against, with 13 recorded abstentions. The motion

'That this Synod:

- a) endorse the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK of November 2015, signed by The Royal College of Psychiatrists and others, that the practice of gay conversion therapy has no place in the modern world, is unethical, potentially harmful and not supported by evidence;*
- b) call upon the Church to be sensitive to, and to listen to, contemporary expressions of gender identity; and*
- c) call on the Government to ban the practice of Conversion Therapy.'*

was carried in all three Houses.

The Chair: That ends this item of business.

Revd Dr Sean Doherty (London) led the Synod in an act of worship.

Full Synod: Third Day Sunday 9 July 2017

THE CHAIR *Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham)* took the Chair at 2.29 pm

The Chair. Good afternoon, everyone. Hope you are having a good day so far. Synod, in a slight change to the ordering of business, I am inviting the Chair of the Business Committee to speak to a proposal for a short variation of business. After she has spoken, I will move the variation of business.

Revd Canon Sue Booyes (Oxford): I am seriously considering getting published “Variation of the order of business” bingo cards. Friends, we have a very short outstanding item of business from Friday afternoon, Item 4, which is an Appointment to the Archbishops’ Council. If we are able to take that item of business now, it means that everything that is urgent and time-limited for this group of sessions will be caught up with.

For that reason, I am inviting you to vary the order of business. I would also just like to remind you that tonight is the Business Committee fringe meeting in the Exhibition Centre, PT/001, first on the left as you go in from the bar, and we would love to see you. Thank you very much, Chair.

The Chair. I now put this proposal for a variation in the order of business to the Synod.

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

ITEM 4 APPOINTMENT TO THE ARCHBISHOPS’ COUNCIL (GS 2061)

The Chair. We now move to Item 4, the appointment of Mrs Mary Chapman to serve a further term on the Archbishops’ Council. I now invite the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu, to introduce this item.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): I beg to move

‘That the appointment of Mrs Mary Chapman as a member of the Archbishops’ Council for a term ending on 31 December 2019 be approved.’

Madam Chair, members of Synod, friends and brothers in Christ, what more can I say about Mary Chapman? She has been in our midst for nearly eight years and has made her presence felt in a good way, both as an active member of the Archbishops’ Council and of this Synod.

Almost everything I would say and I wish to say about Mary is set out in GS 2061, so I

will not test your patience by repeating it now. Mary is an indomitable and tireless Chair of the Archbishops' Council's Audit Committee, and I must apologise now both on my own behalf and on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury that the addition of the debate about the General Election on Friday afternoon meant that the Audit Committee's Annual Report had to be bumped into the synodical interstices.

I am sure that members will have read the report and noted the amount of hard work that the Committee has undertaken under Mary's leadership. The Archbishop of Canterbury and I and other members of the Council and its staff have benefited - and I think that is the right word, "benefited" - from Mary's gentle way of holding our feet to the fire, particularly on matters of governance.

With Synod's approval, we are looking forward to having warm feet for the next two years, which will take Mary to the maximum period of appointment permissible under the National Church Institutions Measure. As we continue through a period of challenge and development, Mary's support, knowledge and wisdom will be an invaluable resource for us all. I commend the motion standing in my name.

The Chair. I now put this item to the vote. Oh sorry, I beg your pardon, I meant to say for debate. I ask the Chair of the House of Laity, Jamie Harrison, to speak, thank you.

Canon Dr Jamie Harrison (Durham): Madam Chair, there is always a slight risk, particularly for newer members, that this sounds a bit like a rubber stamping, a done deal or a *fait accompli*, when someone who has been appointed some years ago is up for a two-year extension.

Very briefly, I am extremely happy with this motion. When I came first onto Archbishops' Council it was Mary who set up various ways of inducting me - a very necessary process - and I followed her wise guidance, wherever possible, and any mistakes that I have made are not her fault.

She is someone who thinks and challenges. She knows about governance and accountability. She is very keen that the Kingdom of God might increase and the mission of the Church is ever evident. She is also very good at audit. I am delighted that she is willing to serve for two more years and I thoroughly recommend her to the Synod.

The Chair. Yes, the Archbishop would like to respond to that, thank you.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Agreed.

The Chair. Let us move to the vote then.

The motion

'That the appointment of Mrs Mary Chapman as a member of the Archbishops' Council for a term ending on 31 December 2019 be approved.'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: Now we move to Item 13, which you will find on Order Paper III. Thanks, everyone.

THE CHAIR: *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 2.36 pm

ITEM 13

WELCOMING TRANSGENDER PEOPLE (GS 2071A AND GS 2071B)

The Chair: Good afternoon, everyone. As was just announced, Item 13, for which you will benefit from having Order Paper IV and GS 2071A and GS 2071B. For those who are watching the clock carefully, I am going to claim seven minutes so we get our 75 minutes for this debate as scheduled, if possible, and then the rest of the programme will go on throughout the afternoon.

Can I invite Christopher Newlands to move the motion in his name? While he is coming to the platform, I will explain how we are going to do the debate. I am asking Christopher to speak for up to ten minutes to the motion and to move it. I will then ask for a couple of speeches from the floor and, then, quite soon into the session, I am going to ask Nick Land to speak to but not move his amendment which is on the Order Paper.

Then, there will be a further opportunity for debate before I seek to ask Nick Land to move that amendment. Then, in conclusion, we will have any remaining time on the motion, as or as not amended, depending on your wishes. I hope that is clear? The speech limit will be ten minutes and then five minutes and then I will be reducing it to three minutes in order to get as many speakers in as possible.

Revd Chris Newlands (Blackburn): I beg to move

'That this Synod, recognising the need for transgender people to be welcomed and affirmed in their parish church, call on the House of Bishops to consider whether some nationally commended liturgical materials might be prepared to mark a person's gender transition.'

It is a great pleasure and a privilege to stand before you today and to bring this motion from the Blackburn Diocese on welcome and affirmation for trans people in the Church of England. I must begin with an apology. I have always believed in the line, "Please do not talk about us without us," and I am sorry that no trans person about whom we will be talking today will be able to speak at this Synod as there are currently no trans members

of General Synod.

It falls to me now to speak on their behalf. I am not trans. I am perfectly at ease in the body and gender I was born in, though I would not mind if this body I was born in was a couple of sizes smaller. I speak today having engaged with a good number of my friends and colleagues from the Church of England trans community, many of whom are here today in the public gallery. I am confident that Synod members will bear them in mind in the tone of the debate that follows, as they will hear what is said about them as addressed directly to them.

I am also pleased that my very good friend, the Revd Dr Christina Beardsley, is on the podium with me to advise on any technical points which may arise in the debate which follows. Tina was vicar of a neighbouring parish in the early 1980s when I was a curate in my title parish and she was asked by my training incumbent to be my mentor. I am delighted that after nearly 35 years she is still able to advise me. Thank you, Tina.

The briefing paper which accompanies this motion tells the story of George, which was the spark which turned my desire to speak out for trans people into a flame and so I need not repeat that story to you now. Instead, I have another story to tell, which I do with the permission of the family concerned. Again, the people involved do not wish to attract unwanted attention, so the names that I am using are not their real names and I am not sharing any information which could identify them or their church.

“David” and “Ruth” are active members of an evangelical Church of England parish church and they have been for a long time. Five years ago, they became parents of a healthy baby boy, “Nathan”. The church was delighted to share their joy at his birth, but it was not long before Nathan showed every sign that he was actually their daughter and not their son. He refused to wear trousers and showed absolutely no interest in any boy toys, only pink princess-type toys and decorations for his bedroom.

After a term at school and following medical advice and with the full support of her Church of England school, Nathan left after one term and returned much happier the next term as “Natalie”, and with very little fuss from staff, pupils and parents. Natalie also started attending church in girls’ clothes and both she and her parents received tremendous support from many, though sadly not all, members of her church family.

But they are surrounded by lots of affirming people and the clergy and church members are on a journey with Natalie as she begins the process with referrals to a specialist gender identity clinic. David and Ruth hope that their church may soon learn to offer them not just a grudging acceptance, but the full support and affirmation they will need as they journey together with Natalie on a path leading to transition to her new gender identity as she grows, God-willing, into a healthy, confident Christian woman.

I hope that this debate today will help to inform that church and many others of the

challenges children, as well as adults, with gender dysphoria face and the vital help and support they are able to give to families facing these same challenges, as there are likely to be far more cases like that in the future.

Looking at referrals for children to gender identity clinics, in 2010 there were 97 children referred from across the UK. In 2016, that number had risen to 1,400 - that information is from the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust. Both as a national Church and as different parish churches ministering to communities, it is the people, the individuals, who matter to us - what St Lawrence called "the treasures of the church" - for we have been entrusted with that most precious gift, the cure of souls in our parishes, schools and chaplaincies, to love God's people as He has loved them.

Our welcome has to be Christ-like, arms outstretched in love, as Christ's arms were outstretched to draw all people to himself when He is raised up. The welcome we offer is the mark of our ministry in Jesus' name, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me", says the Lord.

It is a tragic and disturbing fact that, across the world, trans people have been subjected to appalling violence against them. In the UK, transphobic hate crime has risen by 170% in the last year. That is hate crime reported to the police and as reported by the *Independent*. Elsewhere, the Human Rights Campaign reports that 17 trans people that we know of have been murdered so far in this year because they were different.

Some were killed by relatives who felt that their relative's life as a trans person brought shame and dishonour to their family. Others were killed in random acts of violence because of how they looked. Suicide is another serious factor in the lives of trans people, with a high proportion of trans people attempting suicide. Stonewall reports that nearly half (48%) of trans people under the age of 26 said they had attempted suicide. 30% said they had done so in the past year, whilst 59% said they had at least considered doing so.

The key factors which have been noted in this terribly high rate are: rejection by family and friends; discrimination; physical abuse; being seen as transgender; and, last but not least, internalised transphobia. I do not want to dwell on these sad statistics, but we do need to be aware of the immense impact which our actions, be they welcome or rejection, have upon the members of the trans community.

Rejection, which can mean calling their trans status, their dysphoria, a "fiction" or a "delusion", is top of the list of factors leading to suicide. Friends and family expressing this view can cause an increased risk of suicide; so can churches, my friends. By trying to call gender dysphoria "fake" science and persuading people not to transition or, even worse, to try and persuade them to reverse the process, is causing irreparable damage to the people's lives and wellbeing.

As a national Church, if the Church of England were officially to condemn any such

discriminatory practice - as we did explicitly yesterday with conversion therapy for LGB, but not T people - that would go a very long way to setting the record straight. It is the opposite of that rejection which I am talking about today, namely welcome and affirmation.

Yes, it is possible to use material that is already available under Canon B 5. That is what I did when I first put together such a service for George, and many others have done something similar since then. I know of two such services that have taken place in the past week that people have emailed me to tell me about. We can do so much better than just adapting something that is already there.

When something awful happens that affects our national life, as we have witnessed too often in recent weeks, we do not pull out a generic collect or prayer from our prayer books. We provide a prayer for that particular occasion with the name of the place, the details of the incident and how we might best pray for the situation. The specifics matter.

Similarly, for a service of welcome and affirmation for trans people, it is not good enough just to adapt something that is already there. They deserve better than that, my friends. It would be a wonderful opportunity to create a liturgy, some resources which speak powerfully to the particularities of trans people and make a significant contribution to their wellbeing and support.

I hope that we can make a powerful statement to say that we believe that trans people are cherished and loved by God, who created them, and are cherished and loved by God and He is present through all the twists and turns of their life. Such a theological position would be shown clearly in an authorised liturgy of welcome and affirmation, which would stand as a prophetic sign to all people that the Church accepts the reality of gender dysphoria and the situation of trans people, affirming that God knows them intimately, loves them unconditionally and calls them by their name and bids them follow Him. Yes, a new name, which they have chosen for themselves but which God knows and treasures.

The recognition of a new name as signifying a new identity in Christ is not new to the Christian tradition. The Bible contains numerous life transformations brought about by the redeeming love of Christ: Simon becomes Peter, the rock upon which the Church is built; and Saul becomes Paul, the Apostle. Gender dysphoria is, of course, a reality in the world today and I hope that you will be able to accept this motion which I put as a proposal from the Diocese of Blackburn.

The Chair: The floor is open for debate. The speech limit is still five minutes.

Dr Angus Goudie (Durham): I do not think I will need five minutes but I do urge you strongly to accept this motion. I am a GP and have been for 40 years. I have seen a limited number of people with transgender, but I am aware of several within family and extended groups of friends and I know the struggle that they go through.

I feel this motion gives a real opportunity for doing something to help them and to make them welcome, because there is no question from the stories that we have heard that they go through the most enormous risks of rejection. They are a particularly vulnerable group, probably one of the most vulnerable groups that we will see within our churches.

While it is true, as I am sure will be said, that their real identity is in Christ, the identity that we all are given as we walk around and meet people in church is way that people judge us and the way that people look at us. They put us into boxes. They categorise us. We are rich or poor, young or old, professionals or paupers. These are links which are added on. They do not know the real us that is down inside.

It is necessary to do something to try to help that so that people know that these people that they meet are acceptable; that they are welcomed. Yesterday, we sent a very strong message that we cared about our LGB brothers and sisters. That is something which showed the change of tone which the Bishops' Report earlier in the year called for, but which needed something more than just words that said there should be a change of tone.

We have taken action on that. We have sent out a message, which I believe will be of great encouragement to many of our LGB brothers and sisters, but we have not done the same for transgender. I think it is really important today that we do actually back this motion. I would suggest that the motion - rather than the amendment we are going to hear about - is appropriate because it is straightforward and it says these people can be welcomed, and welcomed fully into the Church.

There are concerns. I know that there are large numbers of children having problems understanding their gender and going to get counselling. Quite a lot of those do not go on, as the paper talks, to require going through gender transformation later in their lives. They are people who have had some uncertainty and may go on to identify as gay later on.

The motion is not talking about this group of people. The motion is quite limited at the moment to those who have gone through gender recognition certification. Those are people who are over 18, who have been living for two years, and can prove that, in their new identity, have got medical reports to say that they have suffered from gender dysphoria, and if they have not had medical or surgical treatment there need to be statements as to why that is the case. These are people who have gone a long way down the road, down something which is very painful personally and emotionally, to get there.

The actual group that we are talking about in the motion is a comparatively small group of adults, but the message that is sent about them in passing this motion will be a message that will actually carry resonances for the whole of the rest of the trans community; that these are people who are welcomed, that if they reach that stage they can be formally welcomed and that they will be welcomed anyway as people who are on a journey and who we love and Christ loves. I would strongly urge you to support this

motion.

The Chair. The Revd Dr Sonya Doragh, followed by Dr Nick Land to speak to the amendment. Yes, maiden speech.

Revd Sonya Doragh (Liverpool): I have three adopted children. We celebrated their identity, their place in our family and in the wider Church family, using the service for the Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child which comes from the Pastoral Services volume of Common Worship.

We edited some of the wording to reflect their age and their understanding. The eldest two were five and seven and the youngest was a baby. We had two different services. The eldest were able to make some of the responses. It was a wonderful occasion. Their Muslim dentist came. Some of their teachers came. Their birth siblings came. In welcoming our boys, we welcomed some of the wider community into the embrace of our faith community.

There are, if I may, some parallels between adoption and gender reassignment. The civic outcome of both transitions results in a new birth certificate, a legally affirmed new identity, yet a personal journey that retains the memory and the formative effects of the previous identity. The notes preceding the liturgy for the Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child state that the liturgy is designed for various circumstances, including others who do not ask for baptism but who recognise that something has happened for which they wish to give thanks to God.

The notes, it appears to me, are intentionally unboundaried in suggesting that the service is appropriate for others, rather than attempting to list all possible circumstances in which the liturgy may be appropriate. The emphasis is on the welcome of the person following a change.

It is not used to mark a movement or turning point in their faith journey. It has its focus on their new identity and subsequent renewed place in society. It can be used to welcome somebody, whether they are in a position to make a declaration of personal faith or not. Representatives of the community, the family in the rubrics - however, it could be the Church family - make statements of welcome.

Personally, following a trauma in my teens and a subsequent fallout with God and with all of you, His family, I spent a number of years pursuing a lifestyle that was destructive to relationships, shall we say. The persistence of my Christian friends meant that I did return to faith and later I returned the embrace of my Church family - with reluctance to start with and more enthusiasm as life has gone on.

I was very glad to be able to renew my baptismal vows publicly, to declare that renewed faith. None of the rubrics or notes in the Common Worship services specify that their use

is for those that have experienced trauma, wandered off the pathway and wandered back again, but I found my needs for welcome and reaffirmation excellently met by the resources we already have.

I am eager that we offer welcome to all those who seek the embrace of our Church family and I agree that, following gender reassignment, using some kind of liturgy of welcome is appropriate. It is right to celebrate, but I am convinced we already have the resources that we need in our existing liturgical library. To seek to write resources that fit every possible circumstance would mean we need a liturgy each. We are all special. That would result in liturgical resources that, in fact, separate us rather than gather us, as our liturgy is supposed to do. I oppose the motion.

The Chair: Now, it is time for Nick Land to speak to but not to move the amendment in your name. You have up to five minutes, followed by a three-minute speech limit.

Dr Nick Land (York): I am grateful to the Diocese of Blackburn for bringing us this motion, because it gives us an opportunity to consider the issue of gender variance and how we best welcome and support transgender people in our churches. This is important, first, because transgender people are often vulnerable, bullied and marginalised and, as Chris has already told us, face a substantial amount of psychiatric illness and persecution and pain.

As Christians, we should be welcoming everyone, and especially those who are at the margins and in pain, into our churches. Secondly, I welcome this because issues around gender variance and gender dysphoria are becoming increasingly prominent in society and in healthcare. We have seen referrals to some specialists in clinics increase by twentyfold in the past ten years and it is right that we give these issues serious consideration. So, why do I believe we need an amendment to this motion? I suggest there are four reasons: theological, pastoral, sociological and practical.

The first is theological. Liturgy needs to follow theology and doctrine and, as the Secretary General points out, the Church of England has no settled doctrinal position on issues around transgender. The 2003 House of Bishops' statement was clearly never intended to be a sufficient basis on which to base liturgy, and since 2003 there have been a range of theological contributions on this subject, including those by Christina Beardsley, Oliver O'Donovan, Justin Tanis and Martin Davy, to name but four interesting but perhaps somewhat disparate contributions. Some serious theological thinking is required before any specific transition liturgy should be put together.

Secondly, pastoral. It is absolutely right that we seek to help people with gender variance to get the best holistic outcome for them physically, psychologically, emotionally and spiritually, but at present it is difficult to see how this can be achieved in the absence of any clear theological underpinning to our pastoral care. Trans people work through their perception of gender incongruity in different ways. Some wish to undergo transition. Many others conclude that transition is not for them. There is a risk that if our sole

contribution to this subject is liturgy around transition, without the accompanying theology, we may inadvertently distort this really important decision-making process.

The third issue is I think around sociological matters. Let us be clear, the majority of transgender people are not campaigning for a post-modern deconstruction of gender. In fact, they are very committed to gender. Their view is that theirs is incongruent with their physical biology. However, there is an increasing sociological trend to see humanity redefined and, rather than being as in the image of God, as a self-defined construct, with gender being fluid, non-binary or irrelevant. This is an important issue for the rapidly increasing number of adolescents presenting to mental health services with identity worries, some around gender, some around a whole range of other identity issues. We need to be much clearer in our thinking about what it means to be made in God's image so that we can give appropriate pastoral care and emotional security to all of our young people, at a time when confusion about who they are threatens to overwhelm them, as well of course as offering them the joy and richness of an identity in Christ.

Fourthly, practical. It is right for us to unconditionally welcome transgender people into our churches, but it would be naive to suggest that this will not require some discussion around practical issues and some central guidance on what it means to genuinely welcome trans people, co-produced with trans people, would be very helpful in truncating some, I suspect, rather heated and unwelcoming PCC debates.

Synod, I would ask you to support my amendment which endorses the Diocese of Blackburn's call for unconditional welcome for trans people to our churches, but calls for theology to precede liturgy, in order that we might make the most hopeful and helpful and positive contribution in this complex but very important area of human experience. Thank you.

The Chair. The floor is open for continued debate. I am going to hear a few speeches before in due course asking Dr Land to move the amendment he has just spoken to.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

The Archbishop of Hereford (Rt Revd Richard Frith): I am speaking as Vice-Chair of the Liturgical Commission. I want to welcome the motion but not the amendment. It is important to emphasise that the Commission is the servant of the Synod and the House of Bishops and will seek to respond creatively to whatever is decided. Having said that, the affirmation of baptismal faith in Common Worship is especially designed to recognise "post baptismal experiences of personal renewal". To go beyond this and to produce a generic liturgy specifically for the welcome of transgender people could be cumbersome and complicated and, arguably, insensitive. The transition of gender identity can be accommodated in the range of liturgical possibilities already available. Rather than commissioning a new liturgy, if the House of Bishops were to commend particular resources, the Common Worship affirmation of baptismal faith would be an ideal option,

together perhaps with some of the prayers for wholeness and healing also in the initiation services. The affirmation in particular reminds us all of the baptism into Christ which we share and which reaches deeper than any part of our identity.

We already have liturgical materials which speak of our common identity as Christians and which are appropriate for the welcome of transgender people. I do though very much welcome the motion as it gives us an opportunity to make a positive statement about inclusion and openness.

Revd Martyn Taylor (Lincoln): Likewise I want to be very supportive of the need to welcome transgender people in the life of the parish church, but I wish again to urge caution on the liturgical front.

Last November, on a rainy night, I made the hour's journey to Addenbrooke's Hospital to baptize four-month old baby Lucy, who had been given two days to live. The hospital had decided to end her treatment for an aggressive brain tumour. When I got to the hospital room, mum and dad were there with four of their closest friends from church and little Lucy, tubed up, comfortable but asleep and unresponsive. We gathered around the cot and I explained that we were going to ask Jesus to bless Lucy, we would pray for God's healing and then I would baptize her in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. I filled a plastic disposable cup with lukewarm water. We brought Lucy to Jesus in prayer and then came to the baptism. As I baptized Lucy, her eyes were suddenly wide open. From having been out of it, she was fully alert and looking around. I thought to myself, "Something just happened; the Holy Spirit has touched Lucy powerfully". We all saw it. Two days turned into weeks. Weeks turned into months. The months have grown to eight. In three weeks' time little Lucy will be one. She is pulling herself up, she is trying to walk. Her last scan showed that whilst she has grown normally, the tumour, which was growing rapidly and was going to take over her brain, has not grown at all since the baptism. Praise God. They can operate and take it out.

When I baptized Lucy and asked Jesus to take her in His arms, God's grace was powerfully at work in her life and all the promises of God signified in baptism - His love, forgiveness, acceptance, new life - were all there for Lucy not because she is male or female, young or old; simply because she is human, created in the image of God, one for whom Christ died.

In 15 years' time, if Lucy wishes to come to confirmation, the Bishop will put his hands on her head and say words to the effect of: "Lucy, God knows you and He calls you by name". There will be others alongside Lucy - Johns, Janes, Marys and Marks - "God knows you and he calls you by name". His acceptance of us has everything to do with Jesus and nothing to do with our gender. He loves us because He loves us and He made Himself for us.

Brothers and sisters, in baptism and confirmation we already have powerful Gospel signs

of God's love and acceptance whoever we are. The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized and went on his way rejoicing, fully accepted and included by God's grace. Whenever we are tempted to doubt God's love and acceptance of us, whoever we are, we do not need a new liturgy, we need to look back to our baptism into Christ and give thanks to Him for the sign of His love, forgiveness, new life and acceptance of us into His family. Baptism is for all of us, the inclusive sign of welcome and identity into Christ.

Sisters and brothers, we already have all the liturgy we need in baptism and confirmation; signs of God's ungendered grace and welcome to us all. Amen.

Revd Dr Sarah Brush (Worcester): Chair, thank you for calling me for this my maiden speech. As a youth worker I have worked with many different young people, in church, in school, in community. Like many others, I have journeyed in faith with young people as they navigate the challenging time that teenage years can present, as they seek to find their personal identity, their identity in Christ and their place in the Church for now and the future.

Today I want to tell you about one particular teenager who I spoke to before Synod and asked if I could share something. This teenager is now an adult who I will call Patrick. I first met Patrick several years ago when she was Patricia. She was part of a youth project that I was involved in and often in the downtime she would ask to speak with me and we would go on long walks around the grounds and she would talk about her faith, about life and about struggles; and she often found life difficult. She struggled with a sense of identity.

A couple of years ago, this young person transitioned to be Patrick. He had prayed about life and his place in the world and realised that much of his struggle was about gender identity. Throughout this time, Patrick continued to be playing an active part in his local church, both at home and at university. As part of his transition he received a new birth certificate, a new driving licence, a new passport and many other documents in his new name. He asked his church how they might do something similar and his church happily worked with him. They put together a service using the Affirmation.

He was so thankful and this is what he says about the experience: "The willingness to pray with me and for me and to affirm my place as a child of God really helped me to feel comfortable in that place and openly welcomed rather than feeling that I had to skirt around it. There is definitely something more tangible when acceptance of a person is visibly shown and celebrated".

This story of a young person of faith feeling at home and cherished by the Church is surely the kind of story we want to hear more often. Patrick could have faced a church which said to him, "We have no liturgy for what you are asking for". He was not. He was loved, he was supported and he remains part of our family.

I resist the amendment but I support this motion.

Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham): Thank you for calling me. I stand here as a cisgendered heterosexual female. That identity however does not blind me to the fact that others are not as I am. We have heard already in Synod reference to the sixth day in the Creation account in Genesis, one where it was declared, “Male and female; He created them”. This sometimes seems to be being used as a reason not to accept the issues around gender that are raised and experienced by trans people.

I would like to offer an interpretation of the Genesis account which might help us to move from a purely binary approach to gender. In the account we are presented with a series of days with other binaries alongside male and female: light and dark, night and day and between dry land and the waters. We know that in these other categories the binaries are not as binary as all that. We experience twilight as darkness falls. Marshland and beaches offer an ever-changing buffer between what is clearly water and what is clearly dry land. These hinterlands, as we might call them, defy the poetic liturgical binaries in Genesis 1 where for the sake of economy of expression the writer does not footnote the complexities. Our creative God provides and is present in the hinterland, too. God is as present in dark as light, see Psalm 139, as present on water as dry land, think of the stilling of the storm. God is present in the twilight and the marshland even though Genesis does not mention them.

I want to suggest that these hinterlands offer an interpretative key which can help us in consideration of gender issues, and transgender issues in particular. I believe this concept can help us to welcome and accept that male and female are not always simple binary categories, as some would suggest, and to be open to the needs of those who inhabit complex gender hinterlands and who are seeking for their bodily expression more accurately to reflect their felt experience, to give liturgical expression to acceptance on a whole Church level rather than individual churches simply putting services together, to reflect that sense of welcome, to demonstrate to all of those living through transition that the Church understands the hinterland. It will give people hope and a sense of welcome. In recognising liturgically the deepest moments of people’s lives, in recognising the moments when identity in humanity and in Christ can be reaffirmed, we offer real welcome and acceptance and enfolding in the grace of Jesus. I urge you to support the original motion.

ITEM 59

The Chair: Dr Land, would you be willing to move your amendment?

Dr Nick Land (York): I beg to move

‘Leave out everything after “That this Synod:” and insert-

- “(a) recognise the dignity of all the people as made in the image of God and so affirm our commitment to welcome unconditionally in all our churches people who experience (or who have experienced) gender dysphoria;
- (b) acknowledge different understandings around gender dysphoria and the field of gender identity more widely;
- (c) consider that the preparation of liturgies to mark gender transition raises substantial theological and pastoral issues that the Church of England has not yet considered; and
- (d) ask the House of Bishops to consider the theological, pastoral and other issues that gender transition raises for the Church and to report back to General Synod by the end of this quinquennium.”

I move the amendment in my name.

The Chair: The debate continues and it would be helpful if you would indicate during your speech whether you are for or against the amendment, which is what we are talking about now. Next Chris Newlands, you have an opportunity to respond.

Revd Chris Newlands (Blackburn): Thank you, Chair. I am grateful for this amendment, which I know is well meant, though I feel that I must resist it, and I will try to explain why. I agree with paragraph (a) the dignity of all God’s people is something which we must, and I am sure always do value when we meet those who come to us. The second point is the one I have most problem with: “Acknowledge different understandings around gender dysphoria and the field of gender identity more widely”.

There are different understandings. Most significantly, there is the view which is held by the World Health Organization and all the medical and clinical organisations in this country regarding gender dysphoria that it is a reality and it needs a great deal of interdisciplinary support through all the medical processes.

The other understanding is that gender dysphoria is a fiction and that is an understanding which causes severe harm to individuals, and that view has to be resisted at all costs. We did this with conversion therapy yesterday and I hope we may be able to send a powerful signal today.

I want to comment about the liturgy and the express view about the fact that liturgy follows theology. The first Christians of course did not have any creeds. They worshipped God. They worshipped through Christ. They celebrated the redemption of the world and themselves through Christ before any creeds or councils were called. It was that expression which led into the formation of the theology and the doctrine which we see and the great creeds of the Church.

If we believe that God welcomes all people, irrespective of gender or sex, then that is the solid theological foundation which underpins liturgical resources which can be drawn up for welcome and affirmation. Liturgy and theology do not need to be separate but they are mutually beneficial and each will inform the other as we progress through this process to seek to bring resources which can be used by churches and by clergy to assist trans people at a significant time in their lives. I urge you to resist this amendment.

Dr Simon Clift (Winchester): I was going to say two things. One was a simple example of a welcome and affirmation from my own experience within our church, but I think there have been enough helpful stories on that, so I would just like to make a modest contribution in support of the amendment towards a greater understanding of gender dysphoria so that the Church's pastoral response to those with gender dysphoria, and the teaching on gender more widely, can be authentically grace-filled and full of truth.

While considering standing for election to General Synod in 2015, I took two books away with me on my summer holiday, one was a great biography about a certain Archbishop with the subtitle *The Road to Canterbury* and the other was *Understanding Gender Dysphoria* by Professor Mark Yarhouse, a clinical psychologist with a career working in this area. Both books have had a lasting impression on me and confirmed my desire to stand for the General Synod.

I will not look at the biography now, but in the book on gender dysphoria Yarhouse invites us as Christians to develop what he calls cognitive complexity, recognising the utility within three contrasting frameworks to conceptualise gender identity concerns. Briefly, these are the three frameworks that he proposes. First, the integrity framework which emphasises the sacred integrity of maleness and femaleness with a complementarity of male and female difference in the biblical narrative. Secondly, a disability framework that sees gender dysphoria as one of the results of living in a fallen world which impacts all of us in different ways, not something a person chooses, evoking our compassion and our empathy. Thirdly, the idea of a diversity framework, so, while rejecting the ideology that sees gender as merely a social construct, enables a transgender person to celebrate their own uniqueness made in the image of God and with the potential for an identity in Christ and full acceptance as a member of his body. Considering these frameworks, my prayer is that we will warmly welcome and affirm transgender people in a way that is authentically grace-filled and full of truth.

The Chair: After Rob Munro, is there anyone standing who is going to speak against the amendment? Lots of people.

Revd Dr Rob Munro (Chester): Thank you for the privilege of being called to speak. I am going to speak in favour of the amendment. This issue of gender identity and the confusions around it is one where there is much pain and confusion - I have had to deal pastorally with three different cases over the years of my ministry - not just for the people concerned but for the whole community of faith, and families in particular, and none of

these things is treated in isolation.

I would suggest that there is a greater dysphoria that we need to name and that may be the confusion or the dysphoria of the theological foundations in which we are addressing these issues. Yesterday we opposed a therapy to change sexual attraction. Today we are affirming those who have been through therapy that changes sexual characteristics. That seems to me at least to beg the question of what foundations we are building on.

I will give you a test on the full range of labels LGBTIQAZ because Facebook gives you over 40 other options to identify your gender by more letters than we can do. By the way, "Z" is for those of you who are bored talking about sexual identity all the time. Too often terminology is the Trojan horse for ideology. I would like to suggest in our consideration of radical Christian inclusion some principles that are not driven by the theological agenda of others but by the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. We have something positive to proclaim to the confusions that lie around us and it is our duty to wrestle with those theologically but also to speak into the agenda and not just be driven by others.

I would like to suggest first that our personhood is not our label. If I welcome and affirm a person, I do not think it means we ought to change the meaning of that when I welcome and affirm a trans person, but, actually, welcoming those who come to us, we should do as did the friend of tax collectors and sinners; we welcome all irrespective of their boundaries and baggage. We affirm them in Christ in a radical new life of repentance and faith, of communion with God and his people. We become incorporated not just individually but together in one body in Christ.

Secondly, our identity is not in self-realisation or self-assertion but in Christ and the community of the Church. The goal of self-realisation owes more probably to Eastern theology than it does to Christian, and we are finding our fullness of identity in Him.

Thirdly, our self-image is not found in relation to the projections of culture and of others but in God Himself. Our body is a gift, not a problem. Particularly speaking into teenage self-image issues, we need to be more positive in proclaiming the God who has created us in body as well as mind and spirit.

Finally, the Gospel is not an affirmation of personal choice but the grace of God calling us from darkness to light. We should reject a secular fundamentalism that says, "You can't tell me I'm wrong", but trust Christ, who has redeemed us and transformed us to love and renewal in Him. I would ask you to resist this motion because piecemeal provisions do not help us recapture the glory of that Christian vision of who we are in Him.

The Chair. I am still interested in speeches that are speaking against the amendment here.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter): First of all, can I thank William Nye very much indeed for

his background paper. I found it extremely helpful. I want to speak against this amendment because I think it is too complicated. I think the original motion is the one that we need to support. Chris Newlands spoke about how very often in this Synod we talk about people rather than with them and I want to talk on behalf of someone who transitioned about four years ago. She has given me permission to use her name - Yvonne Taylor - and I am very grateful for the insights that I got from my conversations with her in preparing for this agenda. She is a member of our congregation. I know that a lot of theological input has already been made into this topic, but Yvonne put it to me with clarity and brevity when she said, "Anne, male and female He made them, not male or female".

Much has been made, I know, of the flexibility that already exists, and we have heard descriptions of some of the services that have been made out of what we already have. However, as Chris Newlands says, we can do better than this and the point is it is not what the trans community want. They want something else and I think it is time that we could be generous and give it to them. You have heard the Bishop of Hereford say that, despite his slight misgivings, the Liturgical Commission will do whatever it is that Synod wishes to them to do, so I urge Synod to support the original motion.

When I was thinking about speaking today, I was very minded of Bishop Matti's words on that first day. The three things that are not for sale I remember very well: Creation, human beings and salvation, but the words I remember particularly were that the "Church does the work of God through liturgy", and I think the work of God with trans people is to love them individually, to know them individually, and so I would please urge you, Synod, to support the original motion and listen to what the trans community have said. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure after the next speaker.

The Chair: I am very grateful. I think I want to hear two or three more speeches and then I would like you to jump up again and do exactly what you have done. After Rowan Williams, I would like to hear a couple more speeches, one for and one against, so those who put their name down, Ian Paul, and is there anyone against? Yes, Tim Hind.

Revd Dr Rowan Williams (York): I want to resist this amendment because if we wait until the end of this quinquennium, the person whose story I want to tell you may not still be here. He is a student at this university. I speak with his permission. I was at his confirmation at Easter at which he received a new name in his new identity. We are lucky that he had not already been confirmed so that he could do that in public. I shall call him Peter and, with his permission, I will quote from an email that he sent me: "It would mean a lot to see the leadership of my Church support transgender people. When I go into a church I feel welcome as a fellow Anglican but there is always that paranoia: if they knew who I was would they still welcome me? If you vote for this, it would be a way of saying that the Church of England officially accepts people like me and thinks that our identity is valid and won't try to invalidate us. Please do it. It shows that the Church likes

transgender people and is inclusive and it stops trans people from shying away from faith out of fear that they will not be accepted for who they really are. Maybe there are people in the Church who think that we are not valid and would pray that we come to our senses and we should not challenge how God made us but just be passive. We cannot be passive because I would rather die”.

Those are not just idle words. He has only been with us a term and I have lost count of the conversations that we have had already about self-harm, about suicide, about fear; a fear that was so overwhelming that he went to that confirmation with badly burned feet. To be confirmed in his new name is, we hope, the start of a joyful journey into self-acceptance. If we wait, he might not make that journey at all. Resist this amendment, please. Thank you.

The Chair: Ian Paul followed by Tim Hind and then I would be interested in a motion for closure.

Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham): It seems to me that we are facing a complex, vital and pastorally challenging issue. I am disappointed that Mr Newlands, in responding to this amendment, seemed to adopt a binary position that there are two views: his view and the wrong view. This is a complex area and there are many discussions and debates even amongst experts here and I think that view ill-serves us as a Synod and as a wider Church.

To suggest that we need liturgies at this time is not just putting the cart before the horse, it is putting the cart about five miles ahead of the horse and over the horizon. The pastoral issues are manifold. It is not just about a moment; it is about a lifetime. I have a transgender person in my own family and we have to learn to live with the long-term consequences of that for all. We have a friend we are supporting back in Nottingham, and her children, and the only thing I can describe as her husband transitioned was it felt like an articulated lorry emotionally hitting their family. It has been absolutely devastating for them as well as challenging for him. On Thursday, I met with a colleague who is struggling to support a woman whose husband transitioned, who is still not mentally well enough to return to work ten years after what happened.

This is a complicated issue. There are wide ramifications pastorally. I support the amendment because it pays attention to the complexity and depth of issues here. We must not put the cart before the horse; neither must we isolate the pastoral needs of individuals from the pastoral needs of those around them as well. I plead with Synod to support this amendment.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): I do not think that our Lord called us to have intellectual integrity; He called us to be foolish for him. I just worry that our Church spends so much time trying to dot all the i's and cross all the t's before it makes any decisions whatsoever. It looks to me as though this particular amendment is the sort of thing that makes our

Church look foolish because it kicks into the long grass what I believe to be actually quite a simple hospitality issue. This is a welcoming issue and I would much prefer to see the original motion voted. If we, as a Synod, decide that we do not want to have additional liturgies because we think we have got enough already then that is a decision, or if we think we need to have additional liturgies because we want to subtly nuance something then that is a decision, but let us not always, because it is in the “too hard” box, put an additional two or three years on to a decision just for the sake of it. This is a long-grass motion amendment and I wish to resist it.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 59.

The Chair: Thank you very much. That has my consent. There is a motion for closure on Item 59, which is the amended version.

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

The Chair: Now the vote before us is the vote on Item 59. That is on your screens as well.

A Speaker: Point of order: can we have a vote by Houses?

The Chair: The vote by Houses is permitted by me if 25 people are standing. There are over 25 people standing so this will be a vote by Houses and the usual arrangements will be announced in a moment.

The vote on Item 59: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 11, against 19, with 2 recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 64 in favour, 103 against, with 4 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 75 in favour, 108 against, with 3 recorded abstentions. The motion

‘Leave out everything after “That this Synod:” and insert-

- “(a) recognise the dignity of all the people as made in the image of God and so affirm our commitment to welcome unconditionally in all our churches people who experience (or who have experienced) gender dysphoria;*
- (b) acknowledge different understandings around gender dysphoria and the field of gender identity more widely;*
- (c) consider that the preparation of liturgies to mark gender transition raises substantial theological and pastoral issues that the Church of England has not yet considered; and*
- (d) ask the House of Bishops to consider the theological, pastoral and other issues that gender transition raises for the Church and to report back to General*

Synod by the end of this quinquennium.”

was lost in all three Houses.

The Chair: We return to the debate on the motion which is now the one as was in 13. We have time for a few speeches. I am going to reduce the speech limit to two minutes so that we can hear as many as possible.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Miss Lucy Gorman (York): I want to suggest that this motion is much more than approving liturgy, more than just another pastoral resource that clergy can call upon if they want to. This motion is much bigger and much more important.

I would like to introduce you to a friend of mine. They changed their name and they had a service similar to what we are proposing here. They said, “It’s not about the service itself that brings the assurance; it’s having a Church that is eager to make sure you feel safe and accepted”. Is this not our duty, to draw alongside people during what can be a huge turning point in their life, celebrating the journey they have been on and encouraging them to share that experience?

We may already have liturgy that could be adapted, but this is about making a statement together as the Church of England; the Church for England. It is about reassuring clergy and parish churches that this is something we can do. If a trans person comes to you, you do not need to worry about whether you are allowed because there is liturgy there already to use. It is about us opening our arms to the trans community; a community that so often feels excluded not just from the Church but ultimately from God. We, and the whole Church, are the ones responsible for showing God’s unfailing, unchanging love, so let us show it to a community where many do not believe it.

I hope we all recognise this is not about sexuality. I was encouraged to read of the new radical Christian inclusion we hoped to carry out after our last group of sessions. This, along with yesterday’s vote, can be one of the first steps. Let us show the trans community that there is a place at the table for them. Let us fling those doors wide open. I ask you, be radical, be Christian, be inclusive and vote for this motion. Thank you.

The Bishop of Worcester (Rt Revd Dr John Inge): This issue has recently become close to my heart. I have to say, to my shame, that if you had asked me a few months ago about gender-neutral loos and worries over pronouns I should have said that it was political correctness gone mad. Then a young person to whom I am close confided to me that for two years or more she has felt like a boy trapped in a girl’s body and I have since then been on a very fast learning curve as far as gender dysphoria is concerned. It is really very painful and what such people need is the affirmation of Church people in the

face of people who say to them, “Oh, it’s just a fad. Oh, it’s just the in-thing”. If anyone could see the suffering that such people go through, they would not dare to say such a thing. Our response needs to be loving and open and welcoming.

The passing of this motion would symbolically be a very important factor in that. I am not sure whether distinctive materials are absolutely necessary, but the motion, I remind you, speaks of “considering” and asking the House of Bishops to “consider” such materials. In so doing, they will no doubt be doing more of the theological work that needs to be done on this. Passing this motion today will have a very powerful effect as far as the signals that our Church sends out to people who are suffering so much in our society. I urge you to vote for this motion.

The Chair: After the next speaker if there is anyone against the motion I would be interested in hearing from them. Then I will be interested in a motion for closure after the speech after this one.

Ven. Gavin Collins (Portsmouth): I want to urge Synod to vote decisively in favour of this motion; the importance of which was brought home to me very powerfully as a result of an email exchange I had a month ago with someone who had contacted our diocese via the contact form. Her name is Lisa and this is an extract from what she wrote: “I am transsexual and currently undergoing transition. I was baptized by the Church of England and grew up with its teachings. I basically would like to know what the Church feels about transgender identities and whether it is welcoming or not of our identities and, if so, whether this is by Synod decree or just an unofficial ad hoc parish by parish decision. As I approach surgeries, I am faced with forms that ask my denomination and I don’t actually know if I will still be welcome, and if I am welcome to what depth that acceptance lies. I somehow feel at times that a contract is about to expire between us and that I will have to wander on paths untrod. Yours, Lisa”.

That initial email led to a very powerful and, for me, very informative ongoing discussion. In describing the motivation for her transition, Lisa reflected, “I was lost from the day I was born and I wandered far. I railed against God and I railed against genetics and I railed against the stars, and I railed against myself for being weak and dishonest in perpetuating the lie that was my male life. My pursuit of transition is an expression of repairing a lifetime of gender attrition. I just want to come home for the first time”.

Synod, as the Church to which Lisa belongs, this motion gives us an opportunity very publicly and very clearly to say she is welcome, this is her home, and we want publicly to embrace her and others like her. In that I urge you, please, to support this motion. Thank you.

The Chair: After John Dunnett I would like to test the mind of Synod on a motion for closure.

Revd John Dunnett (Chelmsford): If one of my three children ever comes home and says, “Dad I’m transitioning”, I shall say three things. Number one is, “I love you”. Number two is, “I will carry on loving you”. Number three is, “I will always carry on loving you”. I think if I was being honest I would also say to whichever child it was, “I have to be honest, I don’t really understand what you’re struggling with and what you’re wrestling with right now, but I do know that your mum and I want to help you. What can we do? How can we help?” I hope that I would also say exactly the same for a family friend, for a neighbour, for a church member if they were to say the same thing to me. I would also, for the record, want to endorse without reservation the proposer’s condemnation of transphobia and fake science, and I hope we all would as well.

This afternoon we are debating something different from all of that, namely whether we are theologically and pastorally convinced that the preparation of liturgies is the right thing to do at this particular moment. I want to say they might be, that might be the right thing for us to do, but as yet I still have a number of unanswered questions: questions of what do we make of the Genesis anthropology; questions of whether gender is self-defined or what degree it has a givenness to it; questions of a pastoral nature, what about transitioning to a bisexual or asexual definition.

I welcome this debate. I find it a little bit difficult to be accused of dotting i’s and crossing t’s. Tim is acknowledging that, thank you. I am genuinely wrestling with some really, really serious theological questions and I, for one, would welcome an opposition to this motion so that we can give ourselves time to come back and talk about the substantial issues and the real pastoral challenges that we have in ministering to people who are hurting in this profound and difficult way. Thank you.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Chair, members of Synod, there are two parts to this motion and they both have to be taken with equal weight. The first is the need to welcome and affirm in their parish transgender people. Is there any one of us who does not say “yes” to that first part? Anybody? So on that first part we will say “yes”.

Then the second bit talks about the House of Bishops. It is the House of Bishops being asked “to consider whether” and “whether materials might be”. Actually, the motion has been very carefully crafted. I welcome it because it allows us to do what Dr Land was trying to suggest without kicking it into the long grass. The theology has to be done but that cannot be done very quickly.

Because the first part of the motion is affirming, the need to affirm that people should be welcomed in their parish church, I want us to vote “yes”, and the second bit, because it is “considering” whether some materials might be prepared, it is provisional, and because it needs a lot of work we shall come back to the Synod from the House with what we thought, but we are going to give it very serious consideration in light of the Secretary General’s paper, particularly paragraphs 12 and 14.

My dear brothers and sisters, let us vote for it. Let us vote for it.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on this item.

The Chair: That has my consent.

The motion was carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is firmly carried. The motion before us is on your Order Paper IV. I have allowed time for Chris. I would love to hear you a third time this afternoon. Thank you very much.

Revd Chris Newlands (Blackburn): Thank you very much for all the contributions and I do wish that I had time to respond to each of them in turn. Alas, I do not have that amount of time but I do want to try to address some of the general principles that were raised.

Gender dysphoria is, of course, a reality in the world today. Since 2004, when the Gender Recognition Act was passed unopposed by any of the Lords Spiritual in Parliament, people have been able to acquire their new birth certificate, which confirms their gender in law, so that they can be married in their new gender. The Church of England has already performed marriages of people where one person has already transitioned. It has also ordained people following transition and allowed people who have transitioned post ordination to continue in their ministry. To agree to this motion would be a major step by the Church of England to embrace the trans community in our nation and those within it who look for a welcome and an affirmation and also to send a signal to the worldwide Church that this is our mission: to love as Jesus has loved, to welcome people in His name and to care for the most vulnerable in our society.

I want to end with three quotations. First of all, with great thanks to Bishop Matti Repo, to remind us that “the Church does the work of God through liturgy”. That is a key phrase I think we want to take with us after this we leave this Synod. If I can say to Bishop Matti, *kiitos paljon*, thank you very much indeed for those words, and I hope that we can take that with us.

I also want to remind us of the wonderful hymn that we sang in York Minster today. We sang “Just as I am, without one plea”. That is for all of us; all of us go without one plea, “but that thy blood was shed for me, and that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come”. We all come to God with what we are, what we have and what has made us the person that we are. Let us welcome trans people who wish to say that as loudly and as clearly as the rest of us.

I want to finish not with my words but the words from an email I received this morning from Natalie’s mother. She emailed me this morning to say, “Thank you for being

Natalie's voice today as she is too young to stand up for herself. Her love for God is so great and so pure, thank you for helping her to have the right to be accepted in church in her new identity". Please, hear a mother's prayer for her daughter and do not let that plea fall on deaf ears.

I commend this motion to you and ask that you agree to this proposal from Blackburn Diocese.

The Chair: The motion is at Item 13.

Mr John Wilson (Lichfield): Chair, there is a great amount of interest beyond this place in the vote that we are about to take. I wonder if you would consider a count of the whole Synod.

A Speaker: Point of order: would you consider a vote by Houses which will achieve the same objective?

The Chair: In the spirit of lifelong learning, as a disciple of Christ, a count by Houses under Standing Order - you would know the number already - supersedes the previous point of order. If I see 25 people standing I might be minded to take a vote by Houses. There are more than 25 people standing so we will have a vote by Houses and the procedure will proceed as before.

The vote on Item 13: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 30, against 2, with 2 recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 127 in favour, 28 against, with 16 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 127 in favour, 48 against, with 8 recorded abstentions. The motion

'That this Synod, recognising the need for transgender people to be welcomed and affirmed in their parish church, call on the House of Bishops to consider whether some nationally commended liturgical materials might be prepared to mark a person's gender transition.'

was carried in all three Houses.

The Chair: That ends Item 13. We now move on to Item 14.

THE CHAIR *Revd Canon Dr Rosemarie Mallett (Southwark)* took the Chair at 4.01 pm

ITEM 14

INTERIM REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION (GS MISC 1159)

The Chair: Good afternoon, Synod. We now move to Item 14 on the agenda: the Interim Report on the Review of the Crown Nominations Commission. This is a presentation under Standing Order 107. You will need sight of GS Misc 1159. The presentation will be made by the Revd Professor Oliver O'Donovan and the Revd Professor Morwenna Ludlow. They will each speak for ten minutes. After the presentation there will be time for questions, which I will take then in groups of three, and the panel will decide the appropriate person who will answer the questions. I now invite the Revd Professor O'Donovan to begin the presentation.

Revd Professor Oliver O'Donovan: Madam Chairman, thank you for your invitation. Thank you to the authorities of the Synod for giving the CNC Review Committee the opportunity to make an initial presentation to you. It will not reveal all that we are thinking or will be recommending - the idea is that Synod will have an opportunity to consider that at length at a later stage - but it did seem appropriate that we should be encouraged to share with you one or two of our thoughts, particularly about the role of the central members of the CNC whom you will be electing for a five-year term very shortly. As well as Professor Ludlow with me, I have Dr Jennifer Strawbridge and Fr Thomas Seville, as members of our Review Committee, behind me.

The central members elected for the five-year period give continuity and stability to the CNC as a single operation for, as well as working on each vacancy as it arises, they meet with the Archbishops from time to time to discuss matters of process and of wider context. They are involved in large expenditures of time.

In the course of our review, we have met all the outgoing central members and have been very impressed, both by the importance of the role they have filled and by the quality of the service that they have devoted to it. Synod has been well served. But because the role is so demanding, it seemed appropriate to share a few thoughts about what is needed in the role and to remind you, if I may, that the way you approach elections to the CNC will have a deep effect on the viability of the CNC over a fairly long period and will strengthen, or possibly weaken, public confidence in its operations.

Professor Ludlow and I want to speak especially on two key concepts: those of discernment, on the one hand, and of representation on the other. Those are words constantly on people's lips. We would like to give a little substance to them. We also want to say just a word or two about the role of trust in this process.

A discernment is always looking forward. It focuses upon the next step that has to be taken. That is what makes a discernment different from backward-looking reflections and judgments. Of course, one cannot look forward without looking backward first. To discern a path for the future we must know the path by which we have come, but then the focus has to shift away from what has happened, away from what is the case, to what is to happen and what will be the case.

The CNC is not appointed to decide which of the candidates sat before it has been the best archdeacon or the best parish priest. It is there to discover which of those candidates will be the right Bishop of that diocese for the next so many years. It undertakes this in the conviction that the Holy Spirit leads and guides Christ's Church. Those who are elected to nominate bishops are charged with following that leading, searching for it and following it as they find it. But to follow God's leading is always to go somewhere new, not just to apply familiar formulae. Of course, nobody can detect God's leading who has not first learned to recognise God's work, yet God is the work of the future. He calls into existence things that do not exist, as St Paul very memorably says it, which is to say that he makes bishops out of those who have not been bishops.

Members of the CNC have to be, above all, open to the possibility that the bishop they find will be a bishop they have never heard of before or thought of before. They make this discernment not as a private matter alone but among 14 voting members, supported by the two secretaries, who have a common faith in the working of God but bring different angles of vision and different concerns to it. Together, they must undertake this journey of exploration. No one of them can know the end of that journey from the beginning. When members arrive at a CNC with their minds already made up, their preferred bishop already selected and in their pocket, as it were, then the whole process becomes subverted and becomes very difficult indeed.

So electing members of the CNC requires one to take a different approach from electing to a variety of other tasks that the Synod may commonly ask its members to perform for it. There are tasks that require tough negotiators. There are tasks that require an ability to argue, to push hard on questions of principle. This task requires something different. It is not a role for the hammer and tongs. It requires an imagination that picks up well and quickly on other people's meanings. It requires a patience that does not have to have the answer straightaway but can wait on the Holy Spirit to make an unclear picture clearer.

The people whom you ask to do this task must be people who know where they come from, know where they are going and hold their convictions deeply, but also they must be essentially co-operative, good at finding common paths and good at understanding people. They have to understand the candidates. All the principles in the world will not help them if they do not know what they are looking at when they look at a possible bishop. They have to be able to understand their fellow members, to understand and cope good-humouredly with approaches to the task that are very different from theirs and may strike them as simply absurd. So the kind of person who wants to take every question straight back to first principles and settle it there, the kind of person who looks for an early closure on every debate and straight on to next business, is just not going to fare very well in this role.

Central members acquire in their term of office a good deal of experience and knowledge. This puts them in a position of some advantage in relation to the diocesan members of a CNC, who are almost always new to the task, so they need to be people, too, who are

capable of using their advantage constructively to help the other participants in the process and to make the process as a whole effective. They will be people who want to achieve a good result, certainly, but they will want to achieve it wherever possible by achieving a genuine consensus of mutual understanding and by bringing other people to share a vision - and sharing a vision that other people have brought - all of which, to be quite honest, is pretty demanding stuff. The people you elect are going to have to be in a certain respect exceptional people, but they will also need to be representative people, capable of acting on behalf of the whole Church. Professor Ludlow is going to take up that aspect of the matter now.

Revd Professor Morwenna Ludlow. Thank you. Professor O'Donovan has just spoken about the task of discerning which candidate is called to be bishop of a particular See. He has emphasised that that discernment is not a particular or private exercise but, rather, a discernment which belongs to the whole Church. It follows that this discernment has to be made by a body - the CNC - which represents the Church as a whole.

We have been reflecting on what this means. It means that, together, the elected CNC members should be able to bring the whole life and vision of the Church to bear on the process of discernment. They will be able to bring a wide range of experiences and contributions with them and to be able sympathetically to assess the perspectives of others in the Church. They will need to be able to engage imaginatively with the needs of the diocese and of the wider Church.

We do recognise that the diverse approaches and traditions within the life of the Church of England have led to the formation of various organised groups in Synod. If an elected member of the CNC comes from a particular grouping, she is likely to come to the task of discernment from a certain perspective. Her views will have a certain kind of foundation. But all people involved in a process of discernment will start from a particular place. That is part of what it is to be human. The task of the CNC members is to build out from that foundation, opening themselves and their particular perspectives up to the prompting of the Spirit, so that they can work together to discern God's vision for the Church. Your task, as Synod members electing the central CNC members, is to discern who will be open to such vision. You are not choosing them to represent particular groups as such but to represent the whole Church, without forgetting the particular traditions and perspectives which have formed them as members of the Church.

We have over the past months heard moving testimony from several people who voiced the view - with reason, we feel - that their concerns were not being represented by the CNC as well as they could be, by which I mean as fully and as imaginatively as they could be. There is a possible reason for this - that is, the idea that the CNC should be representative of various groupings in Synod has come to overshadow the idea that the CNC is representative of the whole Church.

Synod is of course the body by which and from which the central CNC representatives will be elected, but CNC members are called to represent the whole Church, so they are called to represent members of the Church of England whose concerns and perspectives do not map neatly onto particular Synod groupings. If the Church of England were composed entirely of people whose Anglican identity was defined by which region they came from, Synod could simply choose one representative from each region, but we know that Christianity and the Church of England is not as simple as that and one could not come up with a mathematically fair way of ensuring that all interest groups were represented on one CNC. This is why we feel CNC members are called to engage imaginatively with a whole range of concerns - concerns which they will understand from their experience on General Synod to be concerns of the members of the Church. A CNC with members who share a common understanding of representing the whole Church and the vision to look forward in the process of discernment will be able to work well together. They will be able to work well with each other, with the Archbishops and with the candidates, drawing them also into a process of shared discernment to which they are a crucial party.

But we do recognise that the task of the CNC is a difficult and an exposed one. In our conversations we have heard that trust has sometimes become strained. It is important that members of the CNC trust one another and that they are trusted by the Church - including the candidates - to carry out their task. It is the task of Synod when approaching the election of CNC members to choose members who are not only worthy of trust but who will work together to build trust throughout the process.

Reflecting theologically on the notion of trust, we noted that in the thought-world of the New Testament, trust, confidence and faith are often expressed by the same word: *pistis*. *Pistis* is a concept about relationship. It expresses our faith and trust in God. It also expresses the way in which God entrusts individuals with certain callings - like being a bishop - and entrusts the Church with certain tasks, like discerning who should be bishop of where. By Grace, we are related to God in trust and this comes before our relationships with our neighbours. Our human relationships can only become trusting if they are sustained by a faithful relationship with God.

So to conclude, the success of the CNC requires a degree of trust and confidence that those entrusted with the task will put the interests of the whole Church, both local and national, ahead of any sectional agendas. You need to have confidence that the CNC members represent the whole Church. You need to be confident that they will participate in a corporate process of discernment. As Professor O'Donovan has said, the task of being a CNC member involves personal maturity, fortitude and integrity. This can only be found in those who are prayerfully open to the Spirit as they approach this task. When this is not possible, the whole Church suffers. When it is, there may be both surprising and enriching results. Thank you.

The Chair: May I thank Professor O'Donovan and Professor Ludlow for their presentation. We now have time for short questions. The floor is open. We are going to take them in groups of three.

Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford): A whole tranche of correspondence about the Llandaff election has just been published under the Freedom of Information Act. How can members of Synod make use of the same Act to ensure greater transparency in English senior appointments and hold the CNC to account? To put it another way, will your report include a rigorous Christian theology of transparency and secrecy?

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): My question may be regarded as a bit too technical, but it is something that I think is important. We elect six central members and only six. We know over the last five years they have had to work extremely hard. The practice of what happens when a central member cannot make it has to be addressed. At the moment it is done on an ad hoc basis and by trying to match up someone. Is there a better system for filling those casual vacancies on a one-off basis, perhaps by Synod electing more than six, perhaps electing six first team and six second team, or whatever? I think it is an issue that needs to be addressed. Thank you.

Revd Canon David Banting (Chelmsford): The background and context to my question is the sorry and what I believe to be, and so do all the reps from Chelmsford believe it to be, the shameful circumstances in which the recent first-choice candidate for Sheffield was left with no option but to withdraw his acceptance. I realise that that is now before the Ombudsman, Sir Philip, and we will wait to hear that conclusion, but that is retrospective. My question is: is there any occasion or way for concern or protest at CNC's proposal and decision and, if so, how should that be appropriately expressed?

Revd Professor Morwenna Ludlow: Thank you for your questions. To the question of transparency and secrecy we can say "Yes". We have spent a considerable amount of time on theological reflection on the question of trust, as I have already indicated, and that has included some reflection on the differences between confidentiality and secrecy and the difference between transparency and breaking secrecy. We are not in a position to make public our precise recommendations because the Report is not yet fully prepared, but I can assure Synod that, yes, we have considered these issues very carefully.

Revd Professor Oliver O'Donovan: I thank Mr Greenwood for his question about the question of what happens when a CNC member is unable to serve for a particular vacancy. We have indeed given consideration to this problem and we will have something to say about it and some suggestions to make. It is always going to be terribly tantalising when we say things like that to you - I am sorry about it - but you want to know that we have thought about it. We have thought about it. At a later stage Synod will. If the Archbishops are prepared to bring our conclusions to you and invite you to work on them - that is their call, of course - you will, I think, then have the opportunity of considering Standing Orders as they relate to this very precise question.

The very newsworthy events in Sheffield broke upon us, of course, when we were about two-thirds of the way through our work. It was an interesting test case for what we had been thinking. We were not asked to think particularly about the Sheffield case. Sir Philip Mawer, as was said, has been doing that and we wait on what he will say about it. We did, as it happened, hear from the Diocese of Sheffield - not by plan but by happy circumstance - and so have got some information about it. I think it is not clear to us that the process within the CNC can be impugned as a result of that outcome and what happened. That is all I can say, I think. Sir Philip Mawer will say - properly - much more. We are concerned with how the CNC works. There was nothing that we were told that made us feel that the CNC had not worked on this occasion, or had not done what it should have done, or that the way in which it works had contributed to events which were distressing for many people. So I think Sheffield then ceased to be on our agenda - properly - because it did not raise that kind of question. Thank you.

The Chair: I am going to just say one, two and three. Dr John Spence is number three.

Mr David Ashton (Leeds): Having heard of the qualities that are required, as someone who is hoping to put their name forward, it would be rather difficult to sell myself in a hundred words. You may say that I am out of order with that question, but how can you express what you are in a hundred words to what we have been asked to look for when it comes to the voting?

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): We were left in the Diocese of Oxford with a two-year period before our new Bishop was appointed. I have to say that that was a very long time for Bishop Colin to actually hold the reigns for 5% of the Church of England. My question is: is any consideration being given to having a sort of bishop without portfolio who may be able to actually hold the reigns during a period of interregnum, especially in such circumstances? Thank you.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): I am accountable for the investment decisions I make regarding financial resource. To put it crudely, the CNC is making decisions about the investment of people or human resource. I just wonder what you have done, or are doing, to assess the success of appointments you have made as measured by the impact the people have achieved against the goals set for them.

Revd Professor Morwenna Ludlow: Thank you again, Synod, for your questions. Specifically, I want to address the question of how to express what one is in one hundred words. I think one of the things we are saying is that we are not asking for lists of personal qualities. We are asking for people who are opened up to the prompting of the Spirit. We are wanting people who are able to express an openness to working with one another and to represent the whole Church as fully and imaginatively as they can. That is not going to be the same as a list of bullet points on a CV. Of course it is for General Synod to determine exactly how the process of election works and how people

express their candidacy, but I would want to put my focus on those two points. It is openness to God's spirit in a process of working together in a corporate process of discernment.

Revd Professor Oliver O'Donovan: I just want to comment on the second question that was raised from the Diocese of Oxford. We were aware that the whole process of filling the diocese was an exceptionally slow one for various reasons, which we tried to inform ourselves about. The question of making provision for a diocese is not really a CNC question. I think one has to say that is a question for the metropolitan Archbishop. I just want to say that we cannot address that. We have not the terms of reference that allow us to address such a thing.

Revd Fr Thomas Seville (Religious Communities): The task of the group was to look at the workings of the CNC and not its end results. Of course, it is a nomination committee. It is not an election committee. The Queen, after all, is the one who appoints. I am not in the business world, but I would raise a question whether, when one invests in people, quantitative notes of assessment are always the best ones?

The Chair: There are three in a row; one, two, three.

Revd Canon Dr Judith Maltby (Universities & TEs): Has the group given some thought to how to induct members of the CNC?

Revd Canon Sue Booys (Oxford): I wonder if you could say something about whether you have considered the role, the value and the impact of the interview in the CNC process?

Ms Jayne Ozanne (Oxford): I want to come back to this question of trust and the trust issues that we have, because of a lack of openness, which is why people want their man around the table. I want to reflect on some of the conversations we had yesterday when we were looking at how we manage to get young people or minority ethnic voices on place, which are not necessarily that man or woman from that group.

My question is, have you considered appointing members so that they can bring a voice? They may not necessarily be known by the various contingent parties within Synod, but they would give the voice that is needed of young people and particularly minority ethnics which may not get voted. So, have you thought about appointing rather than electing?

Revd Professor Oliver O'Donovan: I thank all three questioners. We have thought quite a bit about the interview process. We have been made aware both of the way in which it has added a new dimension to the appointment of bishops, that those who have served over a long time have come really to appreciate.

Also, it is not always easy for those who are being interviewed and can be very difficult

indeed. We have tried to take the measure of both those things. Perhaps I am not giving too much away about what we may think if I say that we would not as a group wish to see the decision to interview potential diocesan bishops gone back on, but we think there is work to be done as to how this process can be made simply more effective and more satisfying for all those involved in it. More detailed thoughts on that you will read at a due time.

Dr Maltby, thank you for your question about induction. It is very nice just to take this occasion to thank Dr Maltby as representative of a number of members of this body who came along to share their wisdom with us and to help us. Without them, we would not have begun. Thank you, Dr Maltby, and all others who came to see us. Yes, indeed, we have considered a good deal about induction. It is a matter which we think is quite critical to making the CNC, when it meets under tight time constraints in a vacancy, get up and going with a sense that everybody knows the direction they are going from the beginning and not waste any of the precious time that it has at its disposal.

Exploring ways in which preparation can be undertaken previous to the meeting of the CNC, but also even previous to vacancies by Vacancy in See Committees has been part of our reflections. With that trailer, I think I should leave it and ask Dr Ludlow to say something on the third question.

Revd Professor Morwenna Ludlow: In response to Jayne Ozanne's question on trust, thank you again for the question. It is not the role of our Committee to appoint members of the central CNC. It is Synod's role to appoint those members. I suppose we are asking Synod to think imaginatively and openly about ways of ensuring whoever is appointed is in touch with a wide range of voices for whom they can be an advocate.

The process of election, which you are about to engage in, will be part of that and possibly the process of induction and preparation might also be part of that. As part of our conversations, we heard some very imaginative proposals from various representatives about how they have engaged with the voices of the young, for example. I do believe that, although there is a good reason for wanting the membership of the central CNC to be more diverse, there are also ways of representing voices which are not on the CNC which can be done with creativity and integrity.

The Chair: Synod, I was just about to say that we are going to draw stumps at this point because we are slightly over time and I think it would be good to, just once again, thank Professor O'Donovan and Professor Ludlow and say that this item is now concluded.

THE CHAIR *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* took the Chair at 4.41 pm

The Chair: Members of Synod, before we come to the next item, I have been asked if Angus Goudie, Jack Shelley or Mike Laws are in the Chamber - or anyone else who is a licensed GP - if they could present themselves at the information desk as soon as

possible, thank you.

ITEM 15

CLERGY WELLBEING: REPORT FROM THE HOUSE OF CLERGY (GS 2072)

The Chair. We come now to Item 15, Clergy Wellbeing, a Report from the House of Clergy. For this item, you will need GS 2072 and the background paper from the Archbishops' Council, GS Misc 1163. I was minded to suggest, Synod, that the best way of responding to a debate on clergy wellbeing today might be to suspend the sitting for the next hour and a quarter and to let everyone enjoy time around the lake, but I would not want to disappoint you. I now invite Canon Simon Butler to move Item 15 and he has up to ten minutes.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I beg to move

'That this Synod:

- (a) welcome and support the proposal to establish a Covenant for Clergy Wellbeing as laid out in GS 2072; and
- (b) invite the Appointments Committee to appoint a Clergy Wellbeing Working Group to bring proposals for such a Covenant back to this Synod by July 2019.'

Thank you, Chair, and for stealing my joke.

The Chair. No sympathy from me.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Mr Chairman, it is late Sunday afternoon, there is tennis on the television - and I have noticed on one or two iPads - and we have already listened to and participated in an important debate on a challenging topic. We have heard in that of the importance of treating people as people and not simply as a subject of ethical or theological speculation.

This debate is about people too: the deacons, priests and Bishops of the Church of England. We come in all shapes and sizes. Our physical, mental and psychological health affect our ability to be resilient and the way we face life's challenges - the ones we all share - are as varied as the roughly 20,000 people that we, in fact, are.

Our ability to manage our own lives and our levels of self-knowledge and understanding range across the spectrum as well. Each one of us has a range of marvellous gifts and God-given abilities, made as we are in God's image, redeemed by the loving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and equipped by the Holy Spirit.

At the same time, we all have our blind spots, our failings, our personal demons and our character flaws. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and all of that comes before we get ordained. When we do reach that point of ordination, we take on great additional responsibilities which come with the willingness to say the words, "I believe that God has called me."

Along with those gifts and frailties, we bring expectations of ourselves - some more fantasy than reality. We bring our insecurities and immaturities too, which we often hide behind the role we inhabit. We face the expectations of the Church, formed by Scripture, tradition and reason, which at its best frees us to be, as fully, the bishops, priests and deacons God has called us to be, servants of the Kingdom who point others to the Lord and, at its worst, mould us into a straitjacket that slowly ekes away our human goodness into a caricature of Christ.

We face the expectation of our congregations if we serve in parishes, or our institutions if we serve elsewhere. Some of those expectations are a wonderful gift, reminding us that we are privileged to share in the lives of those we serve and to bring a glimmer of grace to their lives as vessels of the Spirit. Some of them are poisonous, setting us on pedestals, only to rejoice in knocking us off again, treating us as amateurs in a world of professionals, expecting a perfection in us that hides great hypocrisy in others.

This piece of work the House of Clergy invites us to begin today is to recognise the complexity of the role to which clergy are called and the intricate density of the web of relationships to negotiate that make the role both fulfilling and demanding.

It is not, as I said to the House of Laity last night, special pleading, but a recognition that everyone in the Church wants the Church to thrive and that, as long as God calls men and women to be bishops, priests and deacons in the Church of England, those called are helped to help themselves, properly supported by the people around them in local churches and in dioceses, and all this in a way that offers consistency and quality across a national Church of great variety and breadth.

It is to ask the question: what should we expect of one another that the Church's ordained ministers should be happy, fulfilled and effective in their vocation? Wellbeing is not a modern concept. How should we live well has been a question that philosophers since Aristotle have pondered. Previous generations may have come to certain conclusions, but as stewards of the 21st century Church of England we have a duty of care to those who minister in our age.

GS 2072 makes a stab at trying to scope out the landscape of what that duty of care looks like right now. It does not duck the tough love that every ordained minister needs to face up to, along with all of the baptized, that we have to take responsibility for our own wellbeing. The House of Clergy does not believe that we should infantilise the clergy in a culture of dependency with mother Church as a rather overindulgent parent who never

lets their child grow up and then can easily be blamed for all our woes.

Instead, we invite the whole Church to begin a process of imagining what a healthy Church looks like for the wellbeing of its ministers and the role each of us play in that, be we ordained, a member of a local church or PCC, a diocesan or national officer, an archdeacon, a bishop, a member of the Archbishops' Council.

After some debate and consideration, the House has settled on the concept of covenant to express this process, building on the useful but not identical comparison with the Armed Forces Covenant. The House of Clergy have already seen a version of the document which now comes to you in this form. Today, along with, I hope, some useful contributions from the House of Clergy, I am particularly looking forward to hearing from members of the other two Houses of this Synod.

The House of Bishops is, of course, also made up of the same “treasure in jars of clay” as the House of Clergy. Having seen bishops working up close for a while now, I hope we can hear from the bishops about their own wellbeing. If Juvenal famously said, “*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes*”, we might ask the House of Bishops who watches out for the watchmen and women? Who watches out for you, brothers and sisters? What do you need in terms of wellbeing?

Bishops have a particular duty to model care to others, but the question might be fairly asked as to how bishops are seen to receive care from the Church, how they are seen to live well. It will be a gift to this Synod and this process to hear something from you about that. We often expect far too much of you, much of it you willingly embrace, and sometimes I wonder how you do what you do. We need to know how we can support you as well as ask you for insight and vulnerability in that.

Most of all, I am looking forward to hearing contributions from the House of Laity, who bring a vast range of professional, human, lived experience from a whole range of backgrounds. Some of the laity have professional experience of working in fields of wellbeing, medical, psychological and otherwise. Other members of the House will have listened to, cared for and supported many clergy in times of joy and struggle, faith and doubt. I imagine every member of the House will have seen clergy at their best and their worst and will have observations to share about what the local church can do to support and strengthen local ministry and stories of what could be better.

A particular interest of mine in this process is that we find ways of encouraging the local church and PCCs to support the wellbeing of their clergy. This is an occasion for us to listen to that grassroots experience. Sisters and brothers, my sense is that this is a good time to be asking these questions and to work towards some form of benchmarking covenant for clergy wellbeing.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that this Report talks of an Act of Synod, which is a

mechanism open to this Synod to make a significant statement on a matter. Standing Order 40(a) says that an Act of Synod gives, "Formal publication to the same as the embodiment of the will or opinion of the Church of England as expressed by the whole body of the Synod". It is the strongest statement of commitment we have to a course of action which does not require Measure or Canon. It is required to be transmitted to the diocesan synods.

The Presidents, having consulted with the Prolocutors and officers of the House of Laity, have the power to give directions to the diocesan synods, which could include a requirement to debate and consider matters of clergy wellbeing at regular intervals. I thought it would be useful to inform members of that in my opening speech and I will respond to any comments at the end.

Over to you, Synod. The House of Clergy invites you to join in taking this matter forward for the wellbeing of the whole Church and not just its ministers. I have been taken aback in the past year or so by the weight of people saying that it is about time we spoke about this issue and you do not realise how important this is to the Church. I think we are scratching at something the Church is itching to address, something really vital here, and I hope you think the same. I move the motion standing in my name.

The Chair. Item 15 is now open for debate.

Dr Yvonne Warren (Coventry): It has been a great privilege to be part of this group looking at clergy wellbeing, because clergy wellbeing has been a passion of mine for more years than I would like to say. For one thing, I am married to a clergyman, and that has been for a lifetime. He is gorgeous; it is okay.

I have been a bishop's adviser for over 25 years. I have been a psychotherapist for over 30 years. A long time ago, 2002, a book came out called *The Cracked Pot*, which was a result of me looking at problems in clergy and families due to the changes that have taken place. It is not about the past that I want to talk. I continue to have a passion for clergy wellbeing and their families and there are many concerns which have made me feel so passionate.

One of the main things is the fewer clergy that there are - and all to do with money and all the rest of it - this means that many clergy, and particularly rural clergy, are confronted with looking after five, seven, maybe ten churches and all that that means, and anybody here who is in a rural parish will know the problems of that.

In the Church of England, it is really encouraging because we are doing some really good work on Renewal and Reform. Certainly, in our diocese it is very exciting because there is an awful lot about pioneer ministry, working in urban, deprived areas and so on. Like any good organisation, unless we care for the workforce, we are all about doing and nothing about being.

I have a real concern about all that is expected of our clergy - as well as our laity by the way - in the work that we are asking them to do in what now is no longer a Christian country. In my work as a therapist, and just because I meet people, I am finding many clergy are burnt out; I am finding many clergy who suffer from mental health issues; and families who are just about at the end of their tether, and many clergy going off sick.

Are there any answers? Well, I do think that one of the things that we need to have nationally, and not just in some dioceses, is an ethos of care for those who are our workers. I would include stipendiary clergy, all clergy who work for the Church of England and lay people who are also stipendiary in the Church of England.

I would also urge that when we start looking - and we are hoping to have a Working Group to look at the whole thing about clergy wellbeing - that we make sure within that group there are lay people of real experience as well. We have been talking a lot about *Setting God's People Free* and about laity and clergy working together, and too often there is a sense of them and us.

We need to draw together, as God's *laos*, the people of God at this time and work together. Would it not be lovely to see PCCs and wardens really caring about what goes on for their clergy and for their families? We need to be seen doing these sorts of things together.

As we go forward, I would really urge you to support this motion vigorously. Other things that we need to do are really to think about the ministerial reviews that are done, and I think there needs to be some real work done on that, but I would urge you to vote for this motion.

Revd Canon Thomas Woodhouse (Salisbury): I am Chair of the House of Clergy in Salisbury. I too am married to a lay person, and I think she would agree that it feels like a lifetime! Thank you to those who have worked to bring this paper to Synod and to the Secretary General for the background paper.

I was the vicar of Royal Wootton Bassett between 2005 and 2014 and, in that town, witnessed the repatriations that became such a regular part of our national life between 2007 and 2011. Towards the end of that town-wide ministry, people were talking about the Military Covenant in ways that they had not before.

Events in the media caught people's attention and increased awareness. People were made to think more deeply about their relationship with the Armed Forces. A story was lived out, a story of support and encouragement. The story associated with this motion is also one of support and encouragement. It is also of the importance of clergy developing strategies and patterns of good practice, developing partnerships across the whole worshipping community to ensure wellbeing. It is about telling stories and

garnering support. Going forward, I want to encourage the Working Party you have established to remember to continue to consult with partners. I would urge them to include the Anglican Pastoral Care network and also to use the diocesan counsellors, women and men, who make such a valuable contribution to clergy in their needs and bring valuable insights and, I think in the best sense of the word, tell stories.

The Armed Forces Covenant became a focus of good practice when it was talked about when it was realised it could be a shared responsibility. We are most definitely not all members of the Armed Forces; however, we were caught up in their needs. There are people who allow themselves to be caught up in our needs when we tell the stories. Together we have a shared responsibility to make the Gospel of Jesus Christ known and, as we heard proclaimed earlier this morning, the yoke of responsibility is one that Jesus bears with us.

In a Synod and set of sessions that has spent time exploring wellbeing in different contexts, it is timely that we are also allowing ourselves a focus on clergy wellbeing. I invite you and ask you to support this motion and thank you for hearing it.

Revd Canon Rebecca Swyer (Chichester): In the last couple of years in the Diocese of Chichester we have introduced several initiatives in recognition of this need to foster clergy wellbeing. Alongside improvement of housing and a new MDR scheme, we have developed a pastoral care policy on the website that is not a dry, dusty document but designed to be an accessible resource for clergy and their families. It is full of links and advice and it has YouTube clips of interviews with clergy and their families in there, but it also simply acknowledges that clergy households have the same problems as everyone else.

Alongside this, we have also appointed a full-time officer for pastoral care and counselling, dedicated to supporting clergy and members of their household. Confidentiality in this has been absolutely key. Clergy or their family members can self refer. They do not have to go through their archdeacon or their bishop. She then meets people in consulting rooms that are mutual space. They are not church premises where you might bump into someone you know. Some people are then referred on to specialist counsellors but the cost borne by the diocese.

The Ordinal says you cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength but only by the grace and power of God. Ordained ministry brings the greatest joy but also sacrifice, guilt and stress.

Our diocesan initiatives are very much still a work in progress and we are listening to see how things develop, but supporting and enabling the wellbeing of clergy is part of being the household of faith together.

I wholeheartedly support this motion.

The Bishop of Chelmsford (Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell): Thank you for calling me. I want to thank Canon Butler and others for bringing this forward. I certainly support the direction of travel and the ideas being explored there and it will be very interesting to see where they lead. Certainly in the diocese where I serve we have introduced over the past few years what we call “clergy wellbeing days” where we explore a number of issues to do with clergy wellbeing, and I believe they have been very, very well received and well resourced and are slowly beginning to change the culture.

I wanted to speak personally also a little bit, as that was invited in Simon’s introduction, just to say sometimes how it feels to be a Bishop. Sometimes it can be a very heavy weight to carry and sometimes it can feel like you are carrying it on your own. Although we are brothers and sisters to each other in the House of Bishops, we do not see each other very much and it can sometimes be a lonely role. I really want to thank Simon for including that element in this Report and if we take this forward I hope it is something that we in the House of Bishops will give time to.

I also want to say something about the role of the Bishop as a pastor. When I go into schools, which I do a lot and I love, I usually - and this perhaps references the debate we will be having tomorrow when I will be in the House of Lords - I take in all the gear that I wear because the children really love seeing all the gear. There is a lot you can communicate through the gear.

First of all, I show them my pectoral cross and I say, “What you need to know about me is that I am not this very important visitor that your head teacher has welcomed in; I am first and foremost a disciple of Jesus Christ and my job is to tell people about Jesus”. That is the first thing I say.

Then I show them my ring - I will not go into the whole rigmarole here - and say, “But actually, it is a job which carries authority and any position of authority can be a lonely job at times”. Then I show them my pastoral staff and I say, “My job is to be a vicar for the vicars.” I really do take that seriously, as I know my sisters and brothers do. I want to say particularly to Chelmsford clergy here and others, I am sorry, I do not think I do it very well, but I aspire to be a vicar for the vicars. This is why this paper is so helpful because it sets us Bishops free from feeling guilty that we are not offering the care that we want to offer. Do not ever think we do not want to offer it but we cannot sometimes because of the other constraints. That is where this Report is so helpful.

Of course, I cannot resist saying it, the other thing I show them is my hat. Children love the hat. I say to them when I hold up the hat, “This hat is supposed to remind you of something. Does it remind you of anything?” Various suggestions come out. Then I say to them, “Actually of course the hat is meant to remind you of a flame”. When a Bishop puts a mitre on his head, he is putting a flame on his head, because none of this happens without the outpouring and indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

If I have one tiny little, not even a criticism but an area for development of this paper, it is about the spiritual care of those of us in ministry - lay and ordained but especially those in positions of responsibility - because, fundamentally, that is what our ministry is. It is a spiritual ministry to make Jesus known and to care for one another within the body of Christ.

Basically this is me standing up off the cuff having not really thought about it. I did not even read the paper until half an hour ago - because there is a lot of other stuff to read! I want to say I think this is a really, really important debate. I think we need to grow up as a Church and recognise that we must not fantasise about certain people doing this for us but build a culture of wellbeing; what we might call “one another care” within the body of Christ. I see this as a really good way of developing that thinking. Thank you very much.

Revd Preb. Simon Cawdell (Hereford): Chair, I was slightly worried that you might only give me 30 seconds after my intervention yesterday.

The Chair: Do not tempt me, Prebendary Cawdell.

Revd Preb. Simon Cawdell (Hereford): I have the privilege of being the Convenor of the Diocesan Clergy Chairs Forum and it has been a great joy, in fact, to receive the impetus from Canon Butler to look into these issues in this particular way. As a group of Chairs we spent a considerable amount of time at our annual retreats in May 2016 and again last month looking and exploring around the issues of clergy wellbeing, both at a personal level and at the level of diocesan, parish and national provision.

The fruit of our conversations can be found in part in GS 2072 in paragraph 7 where there are a number of issues that seem to arise constantly as places where there is quite extraordinarily patchy provision across the country. One of the things we felt very strongly was any steps that could be taken to encourage dioceses towards best practice would be something that would be welcomed. We were very mindful of the fact that a top-down approach would probably go down exceedingly badly. That is not what we are trying to advocate, but, nonetheless, there is a lot to be said for the idea of there being soft national standards or aspirations which the Church can work towards.

The idea of a Clergy Covenant is something that has come through the Working Party discussions, but, having it circulated it around my colleagues, some of whom you have already heard from, they fed back that endorsing the idea is very good one, both affirmative and indeed probably challenging, as clergy are also called to be good stewards of the gifts given to them by looking after themselves.

There are a number gentle caveats, however, that we would also want to say. One is this should not be seen as something which ends up as an Act of Synod and the Church can

then feel that it has done something. It needs to be something that is a very practical outworking across the issues that we have raised and that you are reading at the moment.

Secondly, we need to be really careful that it is not seen as special pleading for the clergy. I think it is really helpful that the context includes the fact that at the last set of sessions we had a really serious Report about releasing the laity, now being implemented by the Archbishops' Council and about which the clergy Chairs heard at our conference this summer. The two need to go hand-in-hand. We need to find a way of protecting, enhancing and encouraging one another's vocations.

Thirdly, it needs to be seen as something where we are resourcing ourselves. A number of dioceses have excellent resources that they are putting forwards in terms of resilience training and we should be aware that we are not the only profession looking into these. I know for a fact that certainly so are the medical professions and so are the police force, and there is great scope for cross professional training and a sharing of minds that we may find very useful.

Fourthly, we found as we did some research that there were a number of organisations all doing excellent work but still quite often doing so in silos. There is a great deal of good work being done by Sheldon, by St Luke's, by Sons and Friends of the Clergy, to name but a few, and a mechanism for getting them all to talk to one another more closely is a part of this project so that we can ensure all the resources that we will need for it are put in place.

This summer the Clergy Chairs were heartened to hear of the progress being made in taking these issues forwards, both in the fruit of the Working Party, of which national Church institutions are already fully aware, and also in the work of the Archbishops' Council, the Ministry Division, dioceses and others, beginning to address some of the more practical issues that have been raised. Some of this is outlined in GS Misc 1163, for which we thank the Secretary General, and it would be most helpful that the Synod now gives more impetus to this work through the medium of this debate.

I would like to commend the Report to you - I am one of its signatories - and tell you at the outset that it does have warm support. Thank you.

The Chair: Ms Munro and Fr Thomas CR, and can I indicate that after Fr Thomas I shall be imposing a speech limit of three minutes - and so that she might prepare, can I indicate that I plan to call Revd Zoe Heming.

Ms Josile Munro (London): Good afternoon, Synod. Thank you, Chair, for calling me to speak. I wanted to speak as a lay person who has been involved in the recruitment of parish clergy both in my own parish and other parishes. I want to speak in support of this Report and the background report. It is a very well written report which covers the most key issues and says what we are going to do about it.

I think it is most important to recognise that clergy is a valuable human and spiritual resource which will be increasingly in short supply and therefore we need to provide as much support to maintain resilience.

I want to make three points about clergy wellbeing. First, clergy wellbeing should start from the interview/selection and discernment process for a role in a parish or elsewhere. Therefore, we, clergy and lay people, must be better at recruiting clergy in particular for parishes and elsewhere in ensuring they have a better fit between the needs of the parish, their own experience, competency and potential, so that we can ensure they are resilient in the role from the beginning. This will include both prayer and discernment as well as interviewing so we get the right person for the role. One of the things we have to be aware of is that not all clergy posts are the same. Parish clergy are very much on the front line.

Secondly, once selected, the clergy as well as lay people are likely to find themselves with a long list of things to do as a result of the parish profile and the statement of needs. Where appropriate, there should be resources available to enable the parish and clergy to prioritise what can be done to avoid burnout, both of the clergy and the parishioners. As we know, churches can be places of conflict as shown in Paul's letters to various churches in the Bible. We do need - and I know they exist - to make more accessible available support that can actually address conflict, and that should be able to be called on by both the clergy or church wardens or any other parish leaders.

Thirdly, I understand that there are diocesan counsellors and clergy wellbeing days. I think also we could have a similar support mechanism as employee assistants, where there are confidential 24-hour telephone lines that clergy can call at any time of the day and it is much more accessible. They do not have to ask anyone and it can be completely confidential and then they will be signposted. This can be piloted and funded centrally as our employee assistance programmes elsewhere. I understand this will be costly. However, failure of appointments and burnout of clergy are also costly, both to the individuals involved, their families and parishes.

I do so commend the Report.

Fr Thomas Seville CR (Religious Communities): I want to welcome this Report very warmly indeed. I want to say that the warmth of my welcome is not simply because of the quality of the Report, which I think is very high, certainly as a beginning - and I do mean my appreciation, that is not dismissive - but because of the number of clergy whom I meet who are suffering in various ways. The response of the dioceses does vary, as I am sure you are aware. Happily, I can think of a very fine example in a north-western diocese recently where they really came up trumps.

I have just a couple of comments, if I may, and one is on the nature of vulnerability. Quite

properly, we are aiming for happy, fulfilled and effective clergy, as Canon Butler put it. That is quite right and proper, but there are many clergy who, as a consequence of their discipleship, are suffering or have suffered. I do worry a little because of our aims and our hopes and our models here that those who are vulnerable, those who are suffering for the sake of Christ may not get their due and may not get their due in Christ. My understanding of vulnerability is that vulnerability which issues into suffering is a paradigmatic case of where the presence of Christ is. You are all familiar, I am sure, with the idea that when one ministers to someone who is suffering, there Christ is ministering to you. I hope that in our response to clergy who are in difficulties, for whatever reason, that is high in our thoughts and minds, otherwise we will end up being condescending and we will have images of the priest as a super man (usually a man) who is an inappropriate model and encouragement.

I think of those people who are clergy in isolated areas. We have heard that referenced in those looking after ten parishes in a rural area, but there are also those who some of us heard about yesterday who minister on estates, where the idea of numerical growth is not a realistic expectation and where the Church's commitment needs to be for the long term, and where we should perhaps neglect the criteria used for assessing deployment of clergy. Such people who are isolated are not properly described as "disengaged". I worry about some of the language we are using here. Some clergy may well disengage themselves but many isolated clergy have not done so because of wilfulness or eccentricity. We need to engage with them, yes, but it is our neglect where people come into difficulties as a result of being isolated.

The Bishop of Chelmsford referred to the spiritual ministry. As you might imagine, I think that is rather an important thing that I hope will receive greater attention in our future care of clergy. I would suggest that the conduct of worship, worship which is led by either clergy or other people, is actually a very good and important way of pastoral care. It is a very classical statement to make, but the best pastoral care done is by the good worship of the people of God, whether that is in daily office or café church or whatever.

I think the role of liturgy in assisting people (where Christ is of course praying through us, we are not praying through Him in the first place) is rather a vital part of what makes for clergy wellbeing. I just would like to hope that our response to many great clergy who have suffered and who are trying to serve should be given due recognition in the language we use of them. There are many clergy - very great clergy - who are not being properly recognised in this Report.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Zoe Heming (Lichfield): I am one half of a clergy couple which makes clergy wellbeing quite a hot topic in our house - and it does not yet feel like a lifetime, I can say.

Synod, this is one of those Pandora's boxes that we are perhaps afraid to open because

of what might jump out. We might get an overwhelming problem that we cannot ignore or fix. The lid has been loosened and I want to share something I have learned recently which might make us feel a bit braver about this stuff. We know we are trying to change the church culture from the vicar does everything, but we are stretched. We need superhero vicars or bishops to show us the way. Well, they might not wear capes, but disabled people can teach us something here because we already know we cannot do it all.

This time last year, I echoed something that Archbishop Justin said: "To be human is to be limited". I recently interviewed a number disabled of clergy in my diocese to find out about their ministries and what works well and what works less well for them. Interestingly, these are mostly clergy who have become disabled, so they have gone from being able-bodied to less so. That could be any of us so it is worth tuning in to what they are saying.

What I learned about this highlights stuff that this paper also highlights, which I was thrilled about; that disabled clergy are often not disabled by their bodies but by the way we do church and stuff in general. A good example would be I am not in the least bit disabled in my access to the bar and the important work that we do there of an evening together because there is level access. It is not disabling at all - and it is rather good for my wellbeing, too!

I would like to tell you a little bit of what I have learnt from the story of someone I am going to call Mary, and she has given me permission. Mary became a paraplegic about ten years after she was ordained and, contrary to expectations, her ministry has not shrunk; it has grown, with new pastoral initiatives, lay development, powerful sacramental and prophetic witness to the gorgeous Body of Christ, which is most gorgeous when inter-dependent and working together. Her parish is firmly in covenant with her in making the most of her gifts and talents. I also interviewed others who were a bit afraid of their MDR because they cannot keep on faking that they can do all things all the time. Pretending to be strong is not what priests are called to do. We are invited to live the abundant life rather than just talk about it.

We do a bit of a skills audit in our house from time to time. It does not sound very romantic, I know, but it helps us to play to our strengths. If I were to do all I used to do in the home, I definitely would not be able to do things like this. None of us can do it all.

Synod, we cannot afford to not take the lid off this box.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): I want to thank Simon Butler and his colleagues for the Report and for this debate. It carries the typical marks that he often brings of thoughtful balance to a considerate reflection on the issue. I would also like to pick up particularly warmly what was said by Fr Thomas Seville and by Zoe Heming just now, not only the bit about what I said, but thank you, Zoe.

It seems to me that there are different stresses and challenges to clergy wellbeing, as I think Bishop Stephen was saying, at different points in our ministry. From my point of view, the hardest work I have ever done, and the most stressful, was as a parish priest, mainly because it was isolated, insatiably demanding and I was, on the whole, working without close colleagues, particularly in the first few years. That wears people down.

As you go on with different stages of ministry - I am not looking at anyone at all, least of all Bishop Nigel who is just next me here - sometimes one's colleagues can add to the stress. I just wanted to make it clear I am not thinking of anyone in particular there at this moment. It varies but you can find yourself in a place where you have lots of colleagues and you would dearly love a hermitage.

The stresses and problems of wellbeing, as Simon said, come from our own life, from the state locally in which we find ourselves and from the state nationally. Recently the clergy in Manchester and London have had enormous stress which will have consequences over the next few years as a result of what they have had to go through in dealing with issues of terrorism. To that, the Church, often out of the best intentions but not always entirely wisely, adds minefields that line our path and which one is constantly concerned about. The issues around safeguarding, what might come up and what people might be accused of can be a huge worry and concern. You take on a particular parish or a particular chaplaincy and there may be a sad history which is a constant threat.

The resources available for clergy wellbeing within dioceses, and particularly within Bishops' offices, may be very, very limited. I have to say that my own experience over the last few years in dealing with people who may have gone wrong on the CDM process has often contributed very badly indeed to their wellbeing. The process has been a punishment, not the outcome.

I hope the group will look at these minefields as well as the discrete and different aspects of challenges to clergy wellbeing and the need for resources. I am hugely grateful that they should take this on and commend this motion. Thank you.

Canon Elizabeth Paver (Sheffield): I also wish to strongly support this Report and thank those who have worked to produce such a timely, informative and forward-thinking report, and also the Archbishops' Council for their comprehensive background paper.

I could not help but be reminded, as I read these papers, of my many years working for head teachers and deputies through their association, the National Association of Head Teachers, at local and national level, so many similarities occurred. I considered the breadth of responsibility, the expectations laid on them and the negative and demoralising publicity in their schools when they were deemed to have failed. Stress in all its forms was evidenced to me daily and, unfortunately, some broke down under the stress and some even were driven to take their own lives. A similar picture at this time can be drawn

for our clergy. How I would have wished and welcomed a Covenant for Wellbeing for my head teacher members. What can we do as laity to help at parish, deanery, diocesan and national level to avoid unacceptable levels of stress in our own clergy? You might find this very, very basic and fundamental, but I would say let us first of all pray for them - and I know you do - not just in structured worship but every day. Let us all make a commitment to do this from today and encourage all those in our congregations to pray too for the Lord's guidance what each one of them can do for their own clergy's wellbeing.

We are told in Genesis that God made the world and everything that was in it in six days "and it was very good". Please, clergy, if he rested for one day in seven, why do so many of you not follow his example? Laity, try to ensure that your clergy at least heed this message: every battery, whether mechanical or human, needs time to be recharged. Our clergy need time to be recharged on a weekly basis and then holidays - in some places it is a bad word. If we are to attract new vocations to the priestly ministry, we must ensure that we have all the structures possible to support them. The Covenant for Clergy Wellbeing is long overdue.

Any Working Party must be truly representative, so please, members, offer your expertise and your talents to the Appointments Committee if and when they are called upon to set up that Working Party. Synod, I urge you to support this motion. Your part in it is imperative. It is imperative as you go home to your parishes, and to tell them that we are going to do something for the clergy I know will encourage them.

Miss Mary Bucknall (Deaf Anglicans Together): Mr Chairman, may I speak on behalf of deaf clergy, including deaf chaplains among deaf people, and relay some of their views and concerns to you about clergy wellbeing.

In section 8 of the Report on Clergy Wellbeing (GS 2072), reference should be made to an additional smaller group of deaf and disabled clergy.

Deaf clergy have particular needs as they can easily get isolated, working by themselves in a diocese without support from traditional parish structures such as the PCC.

I think all clergy can get isolated, but this is a special danger for profoundly deaf people as they cannot hear conversations without communication support. Isolation can lead to depression and mental health issues if it is unaddressed. It can be truly terrible.

Deaf clergy sometimes find it hard to ask for help due to their fear of not being able to communicate, and often struggle on alone as deafness is invisible. They need more support and more time as they rely heavily on sign language interpreters, lip-speakers and note-takers.

Deaf clergy also have greater difficulty accessing welfare support networks as they cannot easily pick up the phone and talk. Facetime helps, but it is not the same. They

have to travel further afield to find a counsellor or spiritual director who can sign or with whom they can communicate easily.

There is a support group, Deaf Ecumenical Clergy UK, which was set up in 2000. This is pan-denominational. This group meets for a few days once a year (due to distance and time constraints) but not all deaf clergy have been able to attend with the support of their respective dioceses.

Other disabled clergy also have issues specific to their disability.

I therefore welcome and support the proposal for a Covenant for Clergy Wellbeing. I would also like to call for a deaf/disabled representative to be appointed to the Working Group to bring the needs and concerns of deaf and disabled clergy to the attention of the wider Church, and to ensure that they are not forgotten or ignored. It is a question of justice and fairness for all. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure after the next speaker.

The Chair: I think I would like to try to hear just a few more speeches, but I may be looking in your direction a little later. Thank you.

Revd Bill Braviner (Durham): Thank you for calling me to speak. Flourishing as a human being is a good thing. The glory of God is a human being fully alive, as St Irenaeus said, or maybe did not, but if he did not he should have done.

Any good organisation knows that it gets the best out of itself and it is the best it can be only when its people are flourishing, and the Church is no different. The need for wellbeing applies, of course, to the whole people of God and even, I would argue, to others beyond the people of God, for example, those companions on whom many of my friends rely, such as Jarvis the guide dog present here in York for his final Synod before retirement - drinks in the bar this evening.

In this debate we focus on one particular part of God's people, our clergy, and, as the paper recognises, over recent years many obligations on clergy have been codified and made the subject of Measure, and I believe it is now time for us as the Church corporately to codify our responsibilities to the clergy as part of codifying our responsibilities to each other. We need to support their wellbeing and encourage their flourishing.

As somebody who has personally suffered the results of damage to clergy wellbeing so deep that I was off work for two years, I have a personal interest in this, Chair. One result of my ongoing healing from that time is that I now spend some of my time directly working in the area of wellbeing through my role as Diocesan Disability Adviser in Durham as well as being part of Disability and Jesus. One thing I do is I seek to model inter-dependence and mutual care as best I can, affirming that I cannot do all of this on my own, and that is

one direct result of learning through the experience I have had of what we might call unwellbeing.

As I have engaged in this work I have encountered plenty of anecdotal evidence which makes clear the need for much more to be done in the area of clergy wellbeing. As we all know clergy who have been or are struggling with issues of wellbeing, I will not take up Synod's time relating the stories. Suffice it to say that I, and the many clergy like me who have endured personal experience of things going wrong, need to know that our Church is placing clergy wellbeing high on its priorities and that we are doing some serious work on it. Knowing that we are being cared for and that we are cared about is fundamental to secure human flourishing.

I look forward to many opportunities to support this work as we go forward, as I hope we all do, and I warmly commend this motion to the House. Thank you.

Dr Simon Clift (Winchester): As an occupational health specialist, I warmly welcome this Report on Clergy Wellbeing and offer my support to the Working Group. In my reflections I have been looking at research on this subject and would draw the Synod's attention to the Experiences of Ministry Surveys, which is just about to start its fourth iteration, and some really important observations that the EMS survey is revealing. One of the highlights of the 2015 Report is: "The vast majority of clergy are both highly engaged in their ministry and do not report substantively high levels of burnout".

There is a lot of other research in the UK and North America that suggests that clergy stress levels are similar to other professions. I have been reflecting on whether it is sufficient for our clergy to be not more stressed than secular workers. As has been avidly shown in the aftermath of the Manchester Arena bombing, the terrorist attack in the shadow of Southwark Cathedral and the Grenfell Tower fire, our Bishops, deans and parish priests all need to have that capacity to respond in a crisis, to have the agency to be so present in the moment that they can be God's authoritative authentic representative to those affected, and that puts a special premium on the importance of clergy wellbeing.

Responsibility for clergy wellbeing has to be shared between the parish priest and the Church, that is the PCC, that is the diocese. Whereas it is absolutely right to focus on the individual and their responsibilities, I would encourage us to think about going upstream to consider and seek to address the work-related factors that can sometimes have an impact on the health of clergy. I do offer my specialist expertise in this area and several of the speakers and Mary mentioned particular disabilities and how they can impact on an ability to work.

I find myself mentioning Henri Nouwen's book *The Wounded Healer*, and the idea to encourage those whose capacity is reduced perhaps by chronic illness that they can remain fruitful in their ministry. The challenge to me and to the Church is to explore all available and sometimes not yet available means to accommodate, to make reasonable

adjustments to enable their return into stipendiary ministry. Drawing on the limitless resources of Heaven, I think the whole Church can play its part in promoting the health of our clergy for the sake of the whole Church and for the wider society. I do support this warmly.

The Chair: After Ms Carol Wolstenholme, the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham, after which I might be looking in your direction, Mr Freeman.

Ms Carol Wolstenholme (Newcastle): I am fully supportive of the intentions of this Report on the Wellbeing of Clergy, but I am also fully committed to a Church that is reimagining ministry and changing culture to include lay people who will be working in partnership with the clergy to grow the Church and bring hope in our communities. Somehow the lay people seem to have slipped out and seem excluded from the wellbeing that is referred to in this Report.

What I would like to ask is that if this motion is accepted that any Working Group looks first of all at the title of the Report, which is “Clergy Wellbeing”, to make it more inclusive, perhaps “Ministry Wellbeing”, something like that. Also, that in their work the role of lay people in ministry roles are also included because they will have similar comparable stresses and strains with their ministry of the Church and those lay people are incorporated into wellbeing proposals.

The Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham (Rt Revd Paul Williams): I want to strongly support this motion. I am grateful to Simon Butler and his team for the work that has gone into it.

The issue, I think, as we have already heard, is essential to sustaining the mission and ministry of all God’s people, not just clergy and bishops, and particularly during an exciting and innovative season of Renewal and Reform. I was ordained as a Bishop eight years ago, at which point I came to appreciate even more the wisdom of the Harvard business professor who said, “Leadership is disappointing people at a rate they can stand”.

Leading well in our missional climate is one in which it really can mean sometimes that clergy and bishops too may find it increasingly difficult to acknowledge their weakness or to express a sense of vulnerability, or at least do that early enough in order to gain support and help. Many of those I have supported through difficult periods of transition or increased stress have often said, “I wish I had come and spoken to someone about this sooner”.

The Apostle Peter urges us always to be ready to give the reason for the hope that is in us. That can put a lot of pressure on a diligent minister of the Gospel, lay or ordained. It is what often compels many of us to give up valuable time on days off and even occasionally in the middle of the night. But in my experience this hope can be expressed most powerfully when a leader that I have looked up to has been willing to speak about

the hope of Christ sustaining them through disappointment and personal failure as well, and also when they are able to talk about their journey towards renewal and restoration.

I would simply urge further work on this, that for the sake of the Gospel, that in taking this forward we can speak about the hope of Christ displayed in weakness, that we can accept our limitations, continue to rejoice in God's grace and then press on with our exciting priorities around Renewal and Reform.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 15.

The Chair: That has my consent. Mr Freeman has proposed the motion for closure on Item 15.

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

The Chair: I invite Canon Butler to respond to the debate. He has about eight minutes. Thank you.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Synod, this debate started with the Chair reminding us if we could spend some time outside, so I will not take up the eight minutes in the hope that you might get a few extra later on.

What we have done here is begun a conversation and it has been a very good conversation, so let that conversation continue and let me not rehearse all the points that have been made and just contribute to your un-wellbeing by doing that.

Just a couple of things. Bill Braviner talked about codifying and I think that is the case really, that the time has come for us to make sure that what we do in terms of the responsibilities we have to our ordained ministers matches the duties that we have, and that is fundamental to the piece of work that we have begun.

I want to apologise to Mary Bucknall and to Zoe Heming for the blind spot that we had in our thinking and failing to note the needs of deaf and disabled clergy. That has been noted and we will take that on board as we move forward. Our apologies to you for that.

We heard a little bit of theology which I thought was really helpful. We heard from the Bishop of Southwell & Nottingham about strength in weakness. We heard from Thomas Seville about the needs of those who are isolated and the place of vulnerability. There is something about the cure of souls in all of this that is at the heart of what clergy see and what we heard in the "vicar to the vicars" comment from the Bishop of Chelmsford as well, that actually we are all seeking to help one another to grow up and mature in Christ. The phrase about being caught up in one another's care resonated with all of us on the platform. I was struck by an image. I do not know if you have noticed that mitres have been in the news in the past few days. On the Bishop of Chelmsford's mention of mitres,

I happened to post on Facebook the other day that someone said, “What shall we wear into the Abbey?” and I said, “We should all wear mitres”, because part of this responsibility that we have as those who are vessels of the indwelling Spirit is to be ministers of the care and the love of God to one another. What we do not want it is to get into a situation, and this is where *Setting God’s People Free* and the points that Carol Wolstenholme and others mentioned, where the grace of the Holy Spirit is perceived to rest in one individual which they pass on. We, as clergy, need the ministry of others around us.

As a number of other people have said through their stories, it is actually in those moments of vulnerability, in those moments of struggle and the moments when you discover that the love and the grace of Christ to help you keep going does not actually come from the “institution” as it were, but from your brother and sister Christians who you serve in your congregations, that they are the chief source of hope and support and renewal and love in those moments. As the Bishop of Chelmsford has said, it is a busy life being a Bishop and an Archdeacon. Much of what they do, and someone was saying this in a meeting the other night, is reactive, and to be proactive is often a greater challenge. That does not excuse the responsibility of dioceses to make sure their clergy are properly cared for, there is a duty of care, of course, but it does mean that we have to find ways of being the Church, the Body of Christ in all of this to help one another grow and know all of this for themselves.

I was particularly struck by the comment that Thomas Seville made about isolated clergy rather than disengaged. Thomas, you notice we put that word in inverted commas. Not being a great one for statutes in my own spiritual devotion, I do have a statute of the *Curé d’Ars* in my study, who is the patron saint of parish priests. The *Curé d’Ars* lived the quintessentially isolated ministry in his life. He was unimportant, unlettered, and yet he became a wise and godly counsellor and confessor to many, many people and never left the tiny remote village. There is something about the faithfulness and the vulnerability of that sort of isolation that needs to be honoured. The resilience that that must have required, the grace of God and the centrality of spiritual resourcing is something that comes to my mind as I think of him.

Where do we go with this? The House of Clergy Standing Committee are going to meet tomorrow. We will be in conversation with the Appointments Committee and there will begin two years of work on bringing some form of covenant to you. As a number of people have stated, this is not going to be a top-down idea but a process where we can all call one another to account to ensure that we are becoming more open; a Church that is more willing to be vulnerable at one with another.

I was talking to the Landesbischof over dinner last night and he was remarking how open we were as a group of English Anglicans to talking about our feelings and our faith and our relationship with God in Jesus and he was contrasting that to his own experience in Germany. It strikes me that we do not start from the low point that we often think we do; we are actually in a place that is in some ways very healthy. There is much to do, there

are many gaps, but we are already becoming a Church and I would say in the last two years a Synod where people are talking to each other in a helpful and hopeful way.

Let us take that forward and as we hold this piece of work as a Synod for the next couple of years let us become more a model of that sort of care one for another as we move forward and as we care for one another in our own wellbeing in the short times that we are together. Thank you very much.

The Chair: We now move to a vote on the motion at Item 15.

The motion

'That this Synod:

(a) welcome and support the proposal to establish a Covenant for Clergy Wellbeing as laid out in GS 2072; and

(b) invite the Appointments Committee to appoint a Clergy Wellbeing Working Group to bring proposals for such a Covenant back to this Synod by July 2019.'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is very clearly carried. Thank you very much, Synod. That concludes this item of business.

THE CHAIR *Dean of Southwark (Very Revd Andrew Nunn)* took the Chair at 5.59 pm

The Chair: Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. Before we begin this next item, somebody has very helpfully handed me a piece of paper. I do not understand what on earth I am reading out, but that is not for the first time in my life. The score from Lords! It says on here: South Africa - 119 all out at 5.32 pm; England win by 211 runs; women's cricket - England beat Australia by three runs. I could make it onto the BBC yet!

ITEM 16

PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION

SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS CODE (GS 2073A AND GS 2073B)

The Chair: Anyway, we now move to Item 16, which is our final item of business for this particular session, the Schools Admissions Code. You need GS 2073A and GS 2073B for this particular item. I am going to invite the Revd Tiffer Robinson to present his motion. Tiffer, you have 10 minutes in order to do so. Thank you.

Revd Tiffer Robinson (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I beg to move

'That this Synod:

- (a) call upon the Secretary of State to include provision in the Schools Admission Code requiring admission authorities to allocate places to children of clergy and other workers who are required to live in tied accommodation, and are moving into the authority's area, in advance of the family arriving in the area; and
- (b) call on all admissions authorities to accept letters of appointment as proof of residence ahead of the children of clergy and other workers who are required to live in tied accommodation moving to the area.'

School admissions are an emotive subject. I want to start by saying that my wife and my children and I have been very fortunate. We moved to first incumbency with pre-school children and timely applications were put in to our superb little C of E academy in Rattlesden. I am not bringing this motion to Synod after a personal bad experience. I am doing it because of the number of clergy and lay people who have told me that it is a huge problem and they would like Synod to see what it can do to address it.

Having said that, when I was six my family was evacuated from Serbia, where my father was working, because of the Yugoslav Civil War. When we came back, there was no space for me at the local schools in our area of south-east London. After many weeks, a space did open up, but I still remember something of the worry and distress that went with having no school place in an already traumatic period. At the time there was little understanding of our situation. This is now a situation explicitly addressed in the School Admissions Code - that of civil servants moving back to the UK from abroad.

So why am I proposing that we also ask the Government to address the situation for other families in tied accommodation, including many of our own vicarage families? When those in tied accommodation have to move from one job or role to another, there are two problems they have not usually faced by others. The first is that they have to move house at the same time. There is not the flexibility that is open to many to, within reason, commute further for a period. The property usually has to be vacated soon after the role ends. Interestingly, this flexibility is sometimes open to military families, where the family stay in one place to ensure continuity of schooling whilst the serviceperson comes home from wherever they are stationed at weekends. It is not ideal, but it is open to them in a way that it is not for others in tied accommodation where when the person with the role moves job the whole family has to move.

A move during schooling always means a late or in-year application for a school place, which often means being placed in a school miles away or, in some cases, no place at all for a period. This is simply the situation. I am afraid this motion is not going to fix this. This is a structural problem that there is no way around.

Some in the past have suggested that church schools keep aside places for the children of local clergy. I appreciate the sentiment. This would be clearly preferential treatment, very unfair, as well as deeply unpopular, and it would not address the fact that the situation is faced by many other workers in tied accommodation who would not benefit.

The second problem, though, is fixable. This problem is about documentation. Please do not fall asleep! When you put in a school application, you need to provide proof of residence. If you are buying in a new area, usually you can send evidence of exchanging contracts. If you are renting, you can send a tenancy agreement. But those in tied accommodation do not have these documents and so they have to rely on the discretion of the admissions authority to take a letter of appointment or employment into account and hope and trust that their situation is understood. In some places that is accepted without any question.

In Suffolk, where I am, this seems to work fine and a bishop's letter of appointment is usually accepted and you can then go on the waiting list for a school place as quickly as possible, but in many parts of the country, particularly where admissions fraud is a big problem, clergy are told not to even bother applying until after they have moved and have bills in their names and the new address. This makes an already difficult situation ten times worse and puts already disadvantaged families and children at a further disadvantage. As the academies programme ramps up and more and more schools become their own admissions authorities, the postcode lottery is only to become more and more of a problem.

So what can Synod do? We can ask the Government to address a situation which affects those in many trades, including agriculture and farming and hospitality, ministers of other faiths and religions, and many, many more.

The School Admissions Code explicitly mentions that admissions authorities must be generous in how they interpret residence for the families of military personnel. They cannot refuse a place purely on the basis they do not yet live in the area. I want to make one thing clear. This is not preferential treatment. If you told a military family who have had to move their children to a new school every two to four years that they were receiving preferential treatment, they would not respond kindly. This is about addressing a specific problem by requiring admissions authorities to understand the situation and respond fairly. That is all we are asking for: for the Admissions Code to address the situation of those in tied accommodation in the same way. This is not asking for special treatment for clergy; simply an understanding of the unique situation of those in tied accommodation.

The Secretary General in his note suggested a hypothetical situation where a clergy family might get their children into the local school when they move into the area whereas a local longstanding family does not. I want to clarify. This situation is incredibly unlikely because the local family will have put in an application in time, whereas those in tied accommodation are always putting in a late or an in-year application and so go to the back of the queue.

What you will perhaps hear later in this debate is that this is very unlikely to work, that the School Admissions Code is not due to be revised for quite some time and “They probably won’t take this into account”. First, I want to say: “When has that ever stopped us before?” VAT relief for listed places of worship; asking the Government to accept more refugees; fixed-odds betting terminals. We do not first ask whether it will be effective before lobbying the Government to make these changes. This is no different. Secondly, I have already heard of one clergyman who successfully put his case to an admissions appeal citing this very motion coming to Synod. We have not even asked for it yet and it is already being effective!

But notice that this is a two-clause motion. We are also calling on all admissions authorities to take note of the situation of those in tied accommodation. This will be a huge help to those who are caught in this situation and at least shows that we as a Synod are doing everything we can to address this, albeit in a very modest way.

You will probably hear the argument that military families are not the same as clergy families. Of course that is true. They are not the same as people involved in animal husbandry either. No one is trying to say that we are in the same situation. Generally speaking, clergy do not have to move every two to four years, although for those beginning stipendiary ministry they often do actually have to move, sometimes three times within five years, which is where the problems often happen. But there are those in tied accommodation who have to move more often, and of course who lose their employment and their home at the same time.

Others might say this is an inward-looking motion which is taking energy away from other important issues, but this motion is not just about us. We do not know exactly how many people work in tied accommodation, let alone how many have school-age children, but it is a lot, especially when we include our ecumenical brothers and sisters, including Methodist ministers who usually have to move every five years. For some people, their tied housing is a significant amount of their remuneration that they really rely on.

We had a single parent move into our village with two children. She took on a job in one of our village pubs which did not pay well and had long hours but came with accommodation on site which she was required to live in for insurance purposes. They had moved from about an hour and a half away. There was no way their children could have commuted back to that school. Thankfully, our little school had spaces and there

was no problem. Six months later, they moved on somewhere else and so another school move entailed. This motion also benefits people such as her and, more importantly, her children, who have enough upheaval in their life as it is.

One of the things people have said to me when I have told them about this motion time and time again is: "Well, this is just common sense. Why isn't it the case already?" I agree. It is modest. It is sensible. It levels the playing field just a bit for clergy children and others in a similar situation. I stand to move the motion in my name. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. This motion is now open for debate. Would those wishing to speak please stand? I call first of all the Archdeacon of Dorking - if he is standing - to make his maiden speech, followed Miss Judith Rigby.

Ven. Paul Bryer (Guildford): Paul Bryer, Archdeacon of Dorking. Synod, I would like to tell you about a school, a church and a new vicar.

First of all the school. The school had high expectations of their new vicar: a key member of the governing body, chair of the appointments and admissions committees, confidante of the head, mentor to staff, teacher of RE, leader of school acts of worship, someone who will attend sports days, school plays, barn dances, quiz nights, and be a friend of parents - and I am not finished yet - teachers and children, and conduct multiple and original services at Harvest, Easter and Christmas.

On to the church. The church had high expectations of their new vicar. They had a long-cherished vision of supporting, partnering and resourcing the school in prayer, people and finance and their new incumbent was to have a crucial role in the leadership of this vision.

So to the new vicar. The new vicar, too, had high expectations of herself and both school and church. Both school and church were in the same road as the vicarage, just a couple of minutes' walk away, yet, because of the school's oversubscription and admissions criteria, fairly soon after her appointment it became apparent that it was not going to be possible for her two children to go to the very school on her own doorstep and so she found herself driving three hours every day to take her two children to two other schools situated miles away.

Caught between the expectations of the school, the mission of the church, battling for her children, being a mum, and not wanting to begin a new ministry in controversy, the pressure on this new vicar and her family was nearly too much to bear and she wrote to me as her Archdeacon. She said: "We have an unsustainable situation with our school places. We are trying to keep our struggle as discreet and confidential as possible. However, the whole thing is increasingly stressful and difficult and impossibly time consuming. We thought we could manage the situation until Christmas, but now we go

into January still with three hours a day in the car to and from schools. We are desperate for help”.

Taking this situation up within the Diocese, as I did, and with other relevant authorities, I hit brick walls with frequent regularity and made little progress. Fortunately, the following year, after two costly, stressful and draining appeals, the new vicar's children were given places. However, I promised her that I would take this matter further, that clergy families facing similar circumstances would not have to experience the trauma that this family went through, so thank you, Tiffer, for this opportunity.

I welcome the motion before Synod calling for what is, I agree, a modest amendment to the School Admissions Code. However, it will be a useful signal that all is not well regarding school admissions for clergy and it will be a helpful start in addressing such situations - which are by no means rare. Indeed, had the proposal that is before us today been in place several years ago, it would have allowed the school to have admitted my new vicar's children from the very first day of her incumbency and prevented much heartache and distress in the vicarage, actually, as well as in the church and the school. Synod, I urge you to support this motion.

The Chair: Miss Judith Rigby, followed by Mrs Kathy Winrow for a maiden speech.

Miss Judith Rigby (Canterbury): Thank you, Chair, for calling me. As a clerk to independent appeals panels across Kent, I know in detail the School Admissions Code and its implications for many children and many families. I have been involved in many cases of children who live in a village but have been denied a place due to the number of applications to a popular church school. One example is a school with a pupil admission number for each year group of 15. It has combined class year groups in Year R and Year 1 and, together, the class size is the maximum allowed by law for infants: 30. In one particular year there were 13 siblings allocated places and this meant that only two village children without a current school connection were offered a place. The distress this caused to other longstanding families from the village - and there were many of them - was very evident as they came to appeal.

Giving a place to clergy families or others moving into tied accommodation would mean another child or family losing their place, especially if the vicarage is alongside the school and distance is a criterion for the allocation of places. Any form of jumping the queue would be seen as preferential treatment and could potentially affect a welcome into a village and be detrimental to building good church and community links.

If a child is of junior or senior age, from age seven or Year 3 onwards, an appeal panel is allowed to consider the child's circumstances - for example, the issue of their parent coming to minister in the parish and therefore wishing to engage fully as a family in the church school. A panel considers the prejudice to the school and the prejudice to the

child, and if the balance of prejudice is greater to the child then an appeal is upheld and a place is granted in the school.

This appeal process and the oversubscription criteria used for waiting lists in our church schools already allow for a fair allocation of places for all. Many families experience the trauma that we have just heard about of the vicar that Paul Bryer has just told us. It is for this reason that I would urge you not to support this motion: so that there is a fair allocation of places for all.

The Chair: Mrs Kathy Winrow, followed by the Dean of St Edmundsbury.

Mrs Kathryn Winrow (Oxford): Thank you for calling me. As a former head teacher of a large successful secondary school and current chair of a very large diocesan MAT, I feel I really do need to support the Revd Tiffer Robinson for this motion, even though it may seem exclusive on first reading.

As head of an oversubscribed school, I wait with dread and trepidation for the outcome of the appeals process. I fully understand the Admissions Code and the appeals process, but if appeals are very late in the day it means that you have to restructure your curriculum and your staffing for the next academic year. If that happens in June or July, there are huge difficulties for the school, particularly in terms of appointing new staff. My school was very different to the previous speaker. The admissions area crossed two deaneries with nearly 30 parishes. A few vacancies for clergy in that area could lead to uncertainty within the school as well as uncertainty for the churches who had gone through a long interregnum, as well as the clergy families themselves. I had many of those over the time, some of whom are sitting in this hall today.

It concerns me greatly that as Synod we have just been addressing clergy wellbeing. Surely not knowing the place for your child, being unable to establish your family as a full member of the community with which you are working, worshipping and supporting, both as priest and parent, is an issue. Both of these add to pressures in ministry in a new place, at a critical time.

But as always I want to talk about the young person or the child - because this is about an inclusion agenda, not exclusion. Many children of clergy have already sacrificed much due to their parents' calling. Many will have left friends behind. Many will feel resentful because they become then the child who is not allowed in their local school where their maybe embarrassing parents are taking the assembly, but it is them who have to take the long journey as secondary pupils to the other side of town. It is their imposed sacrifice. The impact is not minimal. This is not about teenagers just adjusting to circumstances. It can be incredibly emotional for them. They cannot even go, possibly, to the local church or the local youth group to talk about it because their friends are at the other side of town and they do not see them at the weekend. Most clergy youngsters - forgive me - do not have it easy.

On a lighter note, I am reminded of that car advert where you have three teenagers and their parents are taking them to school. Not cool. Two of them hide. For one of them it is fine, dad has a new car, but as soon as they touch knuckles it is not cool anymore. Clergy, I am sorry, but your collars are not always cool to your teenagers, and, quite frankly, if they are not settled in their home school quickly at that time they really are going to feel it. Their flourishing is critical to enable your flourishing to do your ministry. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Dean of St Edmundsbury (Very Revd Dr Frances Ward): Thank you, Chair, for calling me. I speak as a trustee of the National Society against this Private Member's Motion of my friend and colleague, Tiffer Robinson, from St Edmundsbury & Ipswich. As Tiffer and others have described, many of us will know how the stress of moving to a new post can be compounded by the uncertainty of whether your child or children has a place in the local school, the stress magnified by the desire to make a good start by supporting the CofE school in the parish or benefice. So the motion is entirely understandable and, to Tiffer's credit, has won widespread support. He is to be commended for identifying an issue that arises because of the popularity of church schools, which are often oversubscribed, with places hotly contested. However, I would argue, Synod, to reject this motion, or at least the first part of it, for the following reasons.

The Government and society generally criticises the complexity of admissions arrangements without always understanding them. Church schools often attract adverse attention because the admissions criteria seem to favour those who can manipulate the postcode lottery to their favour. If the new vicar could now swan in and leapfrog through this divisive complexity, I fear clergy families will be further exposed to the toxic perception that contributes to divisiveness and negativity, not least in the very locality where the vicar is to serve. We should be commending to the Government simpler arrangements rather than adding further complications, particularly ones that will be seen as special pleading and giving privileged treatment to the Church.

Special pleading is there, too, in calling for clergy families to be treated to the same privileges as military families. Having just heard the debate on clergy wellbeing, and taking seriously its content, it is still fair to say that not many clergy families endure the same stress and trauma for the sake of public service and the defence of the realm as the military. Public perceptions will not be sympathetic that the plight of clergy families is equivalent, compelled as military families are by altogether more challenging circumstances and enforced regular relocation.

I would like to suggest that Synod rejects the first part of this motion for these reasons outlined: that it would make complex admissions arrangements even more complicated and risk stirring adverse public attention to the Church on an already contentious and divisive matter.

The second part of the motion is directed at admissions authorities. In many areas, as Tiffer has indicated, admissions authorities already accept letters of appointment as proof of future residence and so ease the way for those who live in tied accommodation to move and find a church school place for their children. This makes total sense to me.

I wonder if I might beg the indulgence of the Chair to consult with his legal advisers to see if this motion might be amended at this stage to omit the first part but retain the second part, B, or each part voted on separately. I am advised that Tiffer would need to agree to this. However, voted on or amended in such a way, Synod would be able to show support for the spirit of this motion in a meaningful way without risking the adverse attention and complications implicit if the first part were to be passed. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you for that suggestion. I will be mulling it over.

Revd Catherine Pickford (Newcastle): I would like to thank Tiffer for bringing this motion. Thank you from the parish priest that I am now and also the child that I was. I am a vicar's daughter and also a parish priest, so I have lived in tied accommodation for all of my life. Broadly speaking, I have enjoyed it. I enjoyed growing up in vicarages, despite the draughts, and I hope that my children will feel similarly positive about their experiences when they look back on their own childhoods. The thing that I very much did not like about being a clergy child was moving house. There was a helpless sense of inevitability about it - especially the second time, when I really hoped it was not going to happen and had a creeping sense that it would. Moving house is also the thing that I most dread inflicting on my own children as they grow up. The difficulty is that, as a parish priest, it is almost impossible not to move.

Two years ago we did move with our children, who are all in first school. We were lucky because the county council accepted a letter from the Archdeacon to say that we were going to move as proof of residency. Before they said goodbye to their friends and their old house, the children had bought their new school uniforms and they had met their teacher and they knew where they were going to go. We watched them visibly relax as they realised that the new school was nice and they were going to go somewhere that was familiar.

This motion does not give those moving into tied housing a big advantage over others. In our case I think it made about three months' difference. It gave us a slightly longer time to find school places. It was the difference between the children knowing and not knowing where they were going to school before we moved. Clergy children are likely to have to move at least once during their school years and this is a way of making it easier for them and for others who lived in tied housing.

I did a bit of research about who else in our parish would benefit from the Government's change - if it was made - to school admission rules in favour of those who live in tied housing. Like Tiffer, I was surprised. There are quite a few people affected. We live in

a rural area, and there are a number of farm workers, the church verger and also the village caretaker. The thing that those people have in common is that they are all on relatively low incomes and in our village they are among some of the poorest. Were it not for the free house, they would not be able to afford to live there. If the Government responded positively to this motion, it would help them as well as affecting clergy families.

Tiffer's motion does not give families in tied housing a big advantage. There are no guaranteed places in schools. For most of us, it just buys us a few months to find school places for our children before we move. It makes it a significantly less stressful process for the children of clergy - and others - who live in tied accommodation.

Mr Robin Lunn (Worcester): Do not worry, Chair, I certainly do not intend to speak for five minutes. I want to speak in favour of this motion but I just have one concern which, hopefully, can perhaps be covered by the mover when he sums up, or it is something that people do need to think about. I remember I used to serve as a county councillor on the old School Admissions Committees. They were very labyrinthine and complex, as many speakers have said, about what the criteria is.

The one concern that I have was touched upon in the Secretary General's paper under point 10. That is the issue for the school if a child or children are able to join a class when there are already 30 children in the class. As is mentioned, with the children of Armed Service personnel, if they join, what you are doing is pushing the numbers up above 30.

In the school of which I am currently a governor, we are three times oversubscribed when it comes to people applying for places. Of course, when children come in, say, in the middle of a term or at the beginning of a term, I really have a concern about having more than 30 children in a primary school class. It is something that the Blair Government brought in and the current Government has not changed, quite rightly. That can be an issue for a school, particularly for a school if its classrooms are in an older style building where its classrooms struggle to cater for 30 children as it is.

I think that is the only drawback I would have with the particular motion. I would like to see that impacted upon or described a little bit more. However, I think the basic point that is being brought forward is a very good one. It would seem very strange indeed that, having spent a period this afternoon talking about clergy welfare, we were not addressing what is clearly a major issue for a lot of our clergy.

As Catherine quite rightly said in the most recent speech, this is not just benefiting the children of our clergy, this is benefiting a lot of other people who might otherwise struggle more profusely if they do have to take their children a longer distance. I would urge acceptance of this motion but I would like that one point clarified, please.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Ven. Luke Miller (London): I would love to support this motion and I acknowledge there is a real issue here. As Chairman of the London Diocesan Board for Schools, I often have these sorts of difficulties coming across my desk and have to say that I am very sorry there is very little, if nothing, that I can do about it. I do not, however, feel that it is possible for us to support this, certainly not in its full form. I would support the division which has been proposed because the second part of the motion is much easier to see as a helpful thing to say.

I would just like to say that it is not simply people in tied accommodation for whom this can be an issue. Many people in social housing find that they get moved very swiftly, sometimes because at last they come to the top of the list and are able to move to somewhere that is slightly better in terms of the accommodation but slightly more chaotic in terms of the education. They sometimes have to move for all sorts of other reasons very quickly.

We will find ourselves in the position where we are jumping queues which, sadly, are formed because of the complexity, the inflexibility and the difficulties with schools admissions processes. If we could find a way to simplify them, that would be wonderful.

As a parish priest in Tottenham, when I was chairman of the board of governors of a three-form entry non-Church primary school, we had just that issue with a member of the congregation who was swiftly moved and who then had to travel not a very long way, but certainly a large amount of time, analogous to a country mile but, as I say, time rather than distance, in order to take her children to school. For a very long time, had my children, who were indeed in that school, jumped the queue that would have proved enormously difficult pastorally for me.

We, I think, had some discussion that we might be able to offer: Bishops and archdeacons can work with patrons and parochial church councils sometimes about the timing of moves. I think that we also need to reflect carefully, as we have been a few moments ago, on the nature of vocation. It is our faith that we are not given contradictory vocations, that God will sometimes through a concatenation of circumstances show his will for where we should or should not be.

It can be that family life is made difficult. I, too, was brought up in vicarages and for a very short while had to be home schooled for precisely this issue. It seems to me that we need to think and work through how we can live out the faith that we have that God will call us into a space which is good for us. The lot has fallen out for us in a fair ground; how can we live that through? I would suggest that we divide this up to give us something very useful that we might then be able to contribute; that we work for simplification of admissions processes, but that we do not support this motion as it stands.

Miss Rhian Ainscough (Leicester): By a process of elimination, you should be able to figure out where I stand. I am not the House of Clergy, I am not a clergy wife - so, you

should figure out I am a vicar's daughter. I am very, very fortunate; I have only moved once, which is very rare for people who are vicars' daughters.

Moving itself is hard. Everyone knows that, if you have moved at all. I remember when I was six I moved in 2003. I am so sorry, "2003" and "six" is probably not what you want to hear! I remember being thrown to my grandma's for a fortnight. My parents said, "You stay there, we'll sort it all out", a bit of a rush, all sorted in a fortnight: they were running around like headless chickens.

I was very fortunate because my parents got me into a good school with relative ease because there were not many people born in the year that I was born, so it was not really oversubscribed in schools. This is not the case for all. One person who I have got permission to talk about is also a vicar's daughter, and she moved five times in seven years because her dad was going through a training. She said the most difficult time was the last time, when she was in year 10, and she was very fortunate in the sense that during the summer holidays was when they were moving, so they managed to get her into a school in time for September. If it was not for that, she certainly would not have started on time. She would have had to go through a whole process of appeals and whatnot.

Clergy children should not have to go through this. They should not have to be passed around and sorted out like that. They should know where they are going. They should know what school they can go to when they move. Especially during GCSEs and A levels, this really is not fair on clergy children.

We have just discussed clergy wellbeing. We want to ensure clergy are not overworked and that they are in a fit state to serve the community. The current system of school admissions can be very lengthy, very complicated and very stressful for clergy. This is just going to simplify things that little bit more, so I urge Synod to please vote on it. It is a simple change which just means that the letter of appointment can be used, as opposed to having to have a rental agreement.

There are no special privileges. We are not asking for anything out of the ordinary. We are not asking for us to get to the best school in the area. We are just asking for things to be a bit smoother, a bit simpler, a bit more straightforward. Is that too much to ask? Please, Synod, I urge you to vote in favour of this motion.

Revd Wyn Beynon (Worcester): I do not think this is about Church schools. That is not what this is about at all. Just put that out of your heads. This is just about getting children into schools. This week I was Chair of House of Clergy and I was talking to somebody who was saying, "I can't take that job because I can't get my child into any school. They need to start GCSEs. Some schools start them at year 8, some start at year 9. She is coming from a school that has already got to a certain point." It is nothing about jumping queues; it is just getting somewhere. And so, he has just said, "Well, that job is not one

I am going for."

I am sorry, God does not make children miserable just to tell me what I should or should not be doing. I took some exception to that remark that was made by a previous speaker. It is not about Church schools. It is just about getting children into any school and it is certainly not about having a privilege or jumping the queue. Please, vote for Tiffer's motion.

Revd Peter Kay (St Albans): I would like to very much support this motion. I would like to challenge the idea that it seeks to advantage clergy children by jumping the queue. Rather, it seeks fairness.

However, I would like to draw attention particularly to the missionary and missional aspects of this as well. One of the most important missional places in any community is the school gate. Relationship-building is key to evangelism, and how better to do that than by having a clergy person being a part of the school community as a parent? Think about how brilliant children are at making friends and helping them to form relationships and bring other children and families into the life in the vicarage.

Think as well how disheartening it must be for clergy and for churches, for years and years and years for the clergy to have to get up at, let us, say 7.45 in the morning and every day, 200 times a year, forward and back, forward and back, having to drive past your local school, thinking, 'If only, if only my kids were there'.

There is a huge missional aspect to this. We need to be supporting mission as well. There are these issues of fairness. I know that this particular motion will not solve every problem but it will make a difference to clergy families and to the churches that they serve. I fully support this motion and I hope you will too.

Miss Fenella Cannings-Jurd (Salisbury): I speak to you, Synod, from my personal experience. I am not a clergy child, nor am I a clergy person and I have never lived in tied accommodation yet throughout my childhood I moved multiple times, eventually changing schools a total of ten times. Precisely because I always lived in private homes rather than tied accommodation, I always got a school place.

This motion is not about clergy or about preferential treatment. It is about reassuring the children of those who, for whatever reason, are moving into tied accommodation that their child will not be penalised because of their job or their circumstance and why that necessitates tied accommodation. Let us stop talking as if this motion is about clergy or about Church schools. It is not. It is about a level playing field in the application process for all children, regardless of the form of accommodation they live in.

The Chair: After Canon Jenkins, the Archbishop of York, and then I would be really looking around - yes, for one of those!

Revd Canon Gary Jenkins (Southwark): I am fully supportive of this motion and I hope that, even if the Secretary of State does not take full notice of it, diocesan boards of education will and they will encourage the governing bodies of voluntary-aided schools, which are admissions authorities, to think very carefully about this matter.

I do not think it is about giving special treatment for clergy but it is, for me, about the Church recognising its particular responsibility for clergy and for the care of clergy. It relates very much to the previous discussion about clergy wellbeing. One previous speaker spoke about the sacrifice that clergy children make and I think we should not underestimate that.

When the Church calls a person to be priest, it calls the whole family to come. Clergy children move around the country. They can live in very demanding places. They can move frequently. The warm welcome of a Church school locally can make a huge difference.

My eldest daughter moved three times and went to three different primary schools, as we moved from place to place. It is not about preferential treatment but it is about exercising proper responsibility and care for those whom we are calling for the work of the Gospel; calling the men and the women but calling their families as well.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): I, too, want to support those who want, with your permission, Chair, to divide the motion up. The first part is going to be very difficult to sustain. The Secretary General's memorandum is very clear that we cannot make comparisons with the military personnel, because there is a Covenant, they move far more regularly than clergy would be moving, so you can see that difficulty and the pressure. I do not think that would work. It would also be very difficult to persuade the whole nation that it is a good thing to be done.

Also, although we are changing this code of practice and arrangements, I think it would make it more complicated. You solve one problem and you end up with another. I just want to read paragraph 14: "As with all school admissions, where places in a school are oversubscribed, one child's offer of a place will always be at the expense of another's refusal. Synod will want to consider the way it may be perceived as possibly seeking privileges for clergy children that are not available to other families moving to an area. It will also want to consider the possible issue that could arise if a child of a family who had lived in a community for many years were refused a place because the child of a family due to be moving into tied accommodation in a few months' time were given priority". I think that is a real pastoral nightmare.

I moved seven times in different places. In one place, our child could not get a school, so we went to the nearest and it took us three years before our daughter moved into a school where I was the vicar. The arrangements then, of course, were not as complicated

as they are now.

That is why I want to support the second part of the motion. This is really the problem: the authorities refusing to actually consider an admission because the person has just moved. Recently we have ordained deacons in York and two families wanted to get their children in before term ended. "Oh, no, no, they have not moved". Do you know what we did? The curates' houses were arranged and the family moved from Durham two months before so that the children could get into school. That is the nonsense.

I want to support (b) of the motion but not (a) because that has more complications, more difficulties. As a pastor, I also want to consider where I am going to be pastoring but not actually disadvantaging anybody who has lived there much longer than me.

The Chair. Point of order.

Mr Philip Geldard (Manchester): Would you be willing to accept a motion for closure on this item?

The Chair. That has my consent, does this have the content of Synod? Would you indicate, please?

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

The Chair. Tiffer, you have up to five minutes to respond to the debate, thank you.

Revd Tiffer Robinson (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I want to thank you all for your contributions. Some very difficult stories which affect children have been heard, but there are also a few misunderstandings I need to clear up.

I want to address Judith Rigby's point. Yes, school admissions are a zero sum game: one child gets a place, another child does not get a place. You seem to imply, as others have done as well, that this would give clergy preference over others on the waiting list, and this is not true. They will be treated just the same way as the other children on that list. This is not about jumping the queue. This is about being allowed to go to the back of it. Please hear that loud and clear.

Frances, as others have already said, this is not about Church schools, which seemed to come up a lot in your speech, and has nothing to do with any form of religious criteria for school admissions either. It is about what constitutes residency requirements for all schools, not just faith schools. This needs to be clear: not all parishes even have Church schools.

I want to suggest to those who are anxious that this might be seen as giving preferential treatment for the clergy to be careful not to present it as such, as we have heard, because

that would not be what this motion is about. It may have been what a previous motion that has not come to Synod was about. It is not what this motion is about.

Just to address Robin Lunn's point about increasing the school numbers in classes, it is not envisaged that that provision for Service personnel would be extended to those in tied accommodation, as I do not think it is for civil servants moving home from abroad either. That is very specific for Service personnel. We would not be asking for that for those in tied accommodation.

I want to just sum up quite briefly. A lot of the stories you have heard today would not have been helped or improved by this motion. Moving schools is a nightmare for most families who move house and that is simply the way things are when schools are full. But what this very small change does is to remove one more hurdle that we and others in tied accommodation face which makes it worse.

What it also does is show that we do support our clergy and their children and will do whatever we can, however modest, to ensure that they, and others in the same situation, are not unfairly treated. I urge you to support this motion.

The Chair. The question has been put to me about splitting this motion. As it has been mentioned three times, I just need to hear from Tiffer what your response to that would be, please, just to help me. Make it quick, please.

Revd Tiffer Robinson (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I can understand the concern behind the first half of this motion, but I do resist this desire to split the motion. The main issue that this motion addresses is the postcode lottery that currently exists, where some authorities and schools understand our situation - which is allowed in the School Admissions Code; there is nothing unfair going on when that already happens - and some others do not.

If it is not written into the admissions code, then admissions authorities can simply ignore requests for understanding, which sometimes is very understandable in areas with high levels of admissions fraud. If this were just about local authorities, that would be different, but as every academy is now its own admissions authority the number that would have to be convinced is going up exponentially all the time. The situation on the ground is changing and has been for quite some time.

I would also like to say that if we are to really help long term, then there needs to be universal understanding for those in tied accommodation, not just clergy, not the hit-and-miss situation that we have at the moment. I oppose splitting this motion.

The Chair. Thank you. I am minded to take the motion as it has been presented to us, given what Tiffer has just said, and taking into consideration the three requests that have been made. Point of Order.

A Speaker. Chair, as this is quite an emotive topic, I wonder if you would consider a counted vote by the whole Synod?

The Chair. Are there 25 standing for a vote of the whole Synod? There are not. Therefore, I put Item 16, as on the Order Paper, to the vote of the Synod.

The motion

'That this Synod:

(a) call upon the Secretary of State to include provision in the Schools Admission Code requiring admission authorities to allocate places to children of clergy and other workers who are required to live in tied accommodation, and are moving into the authority's area, in advance of the family arriving in the area; and

(b) call on all admissions authorities to accept letters of appointment as proof of residence ahead of the children of clergy and other workers who are required to live in tied accommodation moving to the area.'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair. Synod, that concludes that item of business. We now move into worship, so please do not all run away. The worship is going to be led by Mr Tim Hind.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells) led the Synod in an act of worship.

**Full Synod: Fourth Day
Monday 10 July 2017**

MORNING WORSHIP

Canon Shayne Ardron (Leicester) led the Synod in an act of worship.

THE CHAIR *Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool)* took the Chair at 9.20 am

The Chair. Synod, we come to the first item of business for day which is Item 17, the cost of applying for citizenship. Before I do that, I have to announce the outcome of the Open Synod Group quiz in which we raised £300 for the Red Cross and their work with refugees and victims of terror. Can I thank the Open Synod Group for organising that and, if you have never been, it is a great occasion and you get to learn lots of useless information that you will never need again. Please do think about going next year and well done Open Synod Group.

**ITEM 17
SPECIAL AGENDA IV
DIOCESAN SYNOD MOTIONS
COST OF APPLYING FOR CITIZENSHIP (GS 2074A AND GS 2074B)**

The Chair. For this item, Synod, you will need GS 2074A and GS 2074B. I now call upon Ben Franks from Birmingham to move this item. He has up to ten minutes.

Mr Ben Franks (Birmingham): I beg to move

‘That this Synod:

- (a) request the Archbishops’ Council’s Mission and Public Affairs Council to investigate the issues around the cost of applying for citizenship and to make recommendations to HM Government;
- (b) encourage the Lords Spiritual actively to seek opportunities to address the level of citizenship fees in debate;
- (c) urge parishes to raise the issue with their MP; and
- (d) encourage parishes to continue to support those known to them who are struggling with the cost of citizenship fees without incurring debt and to signpost responsible lenders or local credit unions for advice.’

Thank you, Chair. I stand to speak to the motion on the cost of applying for citizenship

on behalf of Birmingham Diocesan Synod. This motion focuses on what we believe to be an unfair basis for charges involved, in addition to the personal cost in applying for citizenship of the UK.

First, it is quite important to explore what citizenship is. In a defining sense, citizenship is a legal status meaning a person has a right to live in a state and that state cannot deport them or refuse them entry. This status is conferred at birth or, in some countries, obtained through naturalisation or citizenship. In liberal democratic states, such as the UK, citizenship also brings with it a right to vote, to welfare, education and healthcare. Acquiring citizenship is seen principally as related to migrants, as with this motion. However, it is vital to recognise that citizenship is not only about migrants but is more generally about individuals' association with the state, society and the communities of which they are part.

Recent political activity has emphasised the relationship between citizenship and civic responsibility; engagement in civil society, voting and jury service being some examples. In addition, as well as legal status, citizenship can also indicate a personal feeling of identity and a social relationship of responsibility and reciprocity. Sometimes these are described in words such as "loyalty", "values", "belonging", "duty", or "shared cultural heritage". This also points to the complex and often assumed relationship between citizenship and belonging to the nation. The British debate on migration and citizenship is set within the context of many decades of policies and reviews. Recent governments have promoted the concept of "active" citizenship as an attempt to transform citizens from passive recipients of public services to actively engaged participants in public life.

In the 2000s, in education citizenship was introduced as a statutory subject in secondary schools and wider proposals were brought forward for language and citizenship courses and tests for applicants to British citizenship. This took place against a background of disturbances and tensions which gave rise to concerns about community cohesion and a lack of shared values. The Church has done a lot of work in this area, especially through parishes which have been enabled through resources by the projects of the Presence and Engagement programme. As a Church we have again recommitted to that by passing the motion moved by the Archbishop of York on Friday calling for the Government to prioritise cohesion of the nation and its communities and affirming the work done by our churches, particularly in supporting the poor and the vulnerable.

The process for those of foreign nationality applying for citizenship in the UK emphasises that citizenship is a privilege not a right. Citizenship is only granted after a lengthy process with much form filling - the main form running to over 70 pages, can you believe - which includes applicants maintaining their bank accounts permanently in credit over a period of some years, being able to prove that they can communicate in the language of the country and completing a test on life in the UK. This is no mean feat in itself, even for UK citizens of birth. Example tests are available online and please do, in your own time, have a go at these. I did fail one on my first attempt. Applicants wait many years to apply for

the privilege of citizenship and are eager to finalise their status and attend a citizenship ceremony.

This motion was moved initially by Central Birmingham Deanery, of which I am proud to be part. Clergy colleagues within Central Birmingham and beyond are regularly asked to complete references for those who qualify and are applying for citizenship. Our churches, along with many across the whole country, provide a warm welcome of Christian hospitality and inclusion to new arrivals to the country and support them in the long journey of settling in the UK. We endeavour to provide pastoral, practical and spiritual care that is appropriate and sensitive to people's physical and spiritual journey. In return, we find our parishes grow in membership and discipleship through this practical outliving of the Gospel. I know that this is a pattern repeated throughout the country. Our congregations want to do the right thing as guided by their faith through both the support I have already mentioned and indeed in bringing this motion before Synod.

The fees required for citizenship are currently £1,282 for each adult and £973 for each child. If applicants make a mistake on any of the forms, the fees, apart from £80 of the adult application (which is the element included for a citizenship ceremony) are forfeited and they must begin the process again. To avoid this, they may pay an additional fee to a registrar from the local authority who will check and forward their forms. The fees are increased on an annual basis using delegated legislation and, therefore, are not brought before Parliament for comment or debate. The fees required in this country exceed the costs of processing an application and, indeed, they far exceed those of other developed nations. Some examples can be found in the helpful note from the Secretary General and the Birmingham Diocese's background paper.

Many of those who are eligible to apply for citizenship are working in the low-paid sectors of our economy due to their uncertain status, making well-paid employment more difficult. Many people save over years to pay for their applications. There are also those whose difficult situation leads them to get into long-term, high-interest debt from unscrupulous lenders to do so. Money advice and signposting to responsible lenders is a key area in which our churches assist those who are struggling.

It is important to be aware that a requirement of applying for citizenship is to already have leave to remain in the UK. The prohibitive cost has no function in managing migration; it simply leaves people, particularly people on low or medium incomes, here but not able to feel a full belonging. Those who do not apply for citizenship but maintain leave to remain are caught in a status limbo. They have a right to reside but are not citizens. As non-citizens they cannot vote, have more limited travel options and they cannot take up their full civic responsibilities, although by this stage they are earning and paying tax. This creates a subclass. It risks undoing the work we do in promoting cohesion, where many hard-working, well-integrated migrants, contributing to the economy and their communities, are locked out of becoming British citizens because the application fee is so prohibitively high, and it has spiralled in recent years. This is not a motion about

immigration and that was our intention. This is about the financial and, to some extent, personal cost of applying for citizenship. We are convinced that citizenship should be about loyalty and not about wealth.

I therefore beg to move the motion standing in the name of Birmingham Diocesan Synod.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ben. This item is now open for debate. I would like to call Carolyn Johnson for her maiden speech followed by Nicholas Lebey.

Mrs Carolyn Johnson (Blackburn): I wish strongly to support all four paragraphs of the motion, but particularly to encourage the investigation of lobbying against the prohibitive costs to children and young people of applying to be British citizens. The Government, through our Lords Spiritual, should be asked to debate and address the level of citizenship fees for children to make them fair, efficient, affordable and accountable.

As a family law barrister specialising in childcare cases, I regularly encounter children and young people who have no legal immigration status. Many of these children and young people were born in the UK or have lived here for most of their lives. Often the visibility of their lack of status coincides with their transition to adulthood. For families I represent it is usually a crisis situation, such as domestic abuse, relationship breakdown, an accident, deterioration of their health or loss of a job that precipitates action regarding their status. In the intervening period, these children and young people will usually have integrated fully into society, built up support networks, settled in our education system and know no other life and speak no other language than English. They have no other home and belong in the UK. However, for many of these children and young people, the lack of permanent immigration status can have a significant negative impact on their life and future in the UK. In adolescence, many have to put their lives on hold, unable to plan for their futures and contribute fully to the society that is their home.

The cost of citizenship applications has been mentioned. The fee for children, which was amended on 6 April 2017, is £973, of which £386 constitutes the cost of administration and £587 is profit to the Home Office. Thus, there is a large discrepancy between the unit cost and the fee charged with no consideration of the impact on children, their best interests or the Government's statutory duty to promote their wellbeing. In many of these cases what is being charged is a pre-existing entitlement under the British Nationality Act 1981 where the Home Office has not been asked to grant but is merely required to register the child's citizenship. Making a profit, let alone one of £690 from a child's entitlement to be registered as a British citizen, is arguably immoral and should be challenged by the Church and Parliament.

The Government's own guidance states that becoming a British citizen is a significant life event. Apart from allowing a child to apply for a British citizen passport, it gives them the opportunity to participate more fully in the life of their local community as they grow up. Assistance by parishes to support children and families and young people who struggle

with the cost of citizenship should be encouraged because communities will benefit from the full economic and social contribution of newly enfranchised and motivated young citizens in their midst.

I also urge the Archbishops' Council to investigate the issue of a fee waiver policy for these children and young people who cannot afford by any means the cost of a citizenship application. This would provide consistency and fairness and allow children to apply without penalty or discrimination.

My husband is a DL in Lancashire and regularly conducts citizenship ceremonies. He is always impressed by the preparation, commitment, enthusiasm, understanding and pride that the people exhibit when taking their oath of allegiance.

Synod, we should encourage and help our children and young people in making that commitment to our country and help provide them the means to become enfranchised and motivated as proud young British citizens. I beg to support the motion.

The Chair. Synod, I should have said there is a five minute speech limit at the moment. After Nicholas Lebey, Kat Alldread for a maiden speech.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Mr Nicholas Lebey (Southwark): Thank you for calling me. I warmly welcome this motion and I will vote for it. I have heard it said many, many times that citizenship is not a right but a privilege. I agree, but I think that privilege should not come at a cost so high that families and individuals end up in debt, often feeling frustrated, stressed and helpless.

As an immigrant who came into this country, and having been through this process, I know how difficult it is to get there. It is complex and expensive, as we heard from the presentation. A small mistake can result in applications being refused and when that happens you forfeit your application fee.

I had that experience three years ago when I put in an application for my two year-old son, paid nearly £1,000 and waited months. I had a letter from the Home Office saying that my son's application had been refused. I was shocked and I could not believe it because I had made the application based on advice received from the Home Office in Solihull. We made an attempt to plead for a refund but it did not work. Not even intervention from my local MP was able to change or persuade them to reconsider my son's case. In the end we had to make a new application and here I am so grateful to the Bishop of Bradford who is now the Bishop of Leeds. It was his support and that of the diocese that helped us make a new application. I started to think to myself, "How can it be that a system designed to help people to integrate into this society makes it so difficult and hard for them?" I was fortunate to have support from the diocese, but for many people, they go round borrowing money, taking high-interest loans and ending up in more

debt. This is not fair. What these people want is to be able to have that full entitlement be able to settle in this country that they call home.

I have talked to a lot of people among the West African community in Thamesmead, the diocese I serve, and people have said to me, "I don't want to apply any more. I have tried several times and they refused me because of a small mistake". Some say, "I won't do it again because I don't have the money". They do not want to spend the little money they have on this process because they think that it is just not fair. In many cases those people work so hard by the letter and all they want is to be able to finalise their stay in this country.

My own story is I entered this country on a one-year missionary visa. When the visa expired, I began the lengthy and expensive process of extending my visa multiple times. In the process I went to the Home Office in Glasgow, Birmingham and Sheffield before acquiring my indefinite leave to remain. When I decided to apply for citizenship I had already spent £3,000 extending my visa, so when I was asked to pay another £1,000 for my naturalisation I asked myself, "Why, why?" but I had no choice. I paid but it was difficult to raise the money. When I hear what people go through and what I have seen through this process, I hear two words: "injustice" and "exploitation", and that is what people go through when they try to go through this process to finalise their stay.

This is not right. I read passages from the Bible such as Exodus 22:21, "Do not mistreat or repress a foreigner", and Leviticus 19: 33-34, "Do not take advantage of foreigners who live among your land. Treat them like native-born ... and love them". The system does not treat us that way.

Synod, we are Christians and as Anglicans we believe in justice and, as a matter of fact, one of the Marks of Mission says that we are to act to transform unjust systems. The motion before us gives us the chance to do exactly that. Let us speak up for those who have no voice. Becoming a naturalised citizen for me was like a blessing, but for so many the path to obtaining this blessing has become difficult and, if you like, a burden. Let us support this motion and, through this, help remove the burden for many immigrants in this country. Thank you.

Mrs Kat Alldread (Derby): This is a very welcome motion for me personally but, much more importantly, I think this is exactly the sort of action the Church can and should be taking to help change unjust structures in our society.

I have lived in the UK for 17 years with leave to remain. For 14 of those years I have been eligible to apply for citizenship. However, I have never done so for a series of reasons, cost certainly being one. For me personally the cost is not insignificant and it has factored into my decision-making. Up until now I have made a choice not to apply for citizenship. I have been very fortunate and, other than not having a vote, which I regret, I have found that my lack of citizenship has not hindered my ability to engage with my community and society at large, but very clearly for many of my fellow non-citizens

this is not the case. We have already heard some stories and seen the case studies that were in the paper that the cost of application for citizenship is virtually insurmountable and is standing in the way of people's full integration and participation in society.

This motion is about so much more than the practicality, though, of how a person would be able to finance an application for citizenship. There is something more important in the message this action would send about the principle of welcome and about how we, as Christians, view and treat other people. Very shamefully, in my country of origin, there has been far too much talk about building a physical wall to keep people out. Very sadly, it appears that the cost of applying for citizenship in the UK serves as a similar barrier to full entry to society.

The motion before us is about the cost of the citizenship application. Thus, the people who are impacted are primarily those who have already gone through the various steps so they know that they meet the requirements, they have ticked all the boxes and they have overcome obstacles. Following all of that, the barrier of cost then stands in their way as one last potentially unscaleable wall.

Our current political climate includes a lot of language about those who belong and those who do not, about holding people at arm's length, seeing them as the "other"; a nameless, faceless mass. One of the most important questions for us is what the Church's voice should be in that dialogue. It is vital that we help give voice to the voiceless and show that there are real human beings with names and faces and stories of the obstacles they have already overcome. We can help identify and discourage the barriers that stand in their way and we can use our influence to help ensure justice, particularly for those in some of the most difficult of circumstances. This is a place where we as the Church and as Christians can be instrumental in change being made so that once there was a wall we can open the door and extend a hand in welcome. I urge you to support this motion.

Rt Hon Canon Sir Tony Baldry (Oxford): First, I think we should send a copy of the transcript of this debate to the Chair and members of the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee and ask the Select Committee to undertake a Committee inquiry into this whole topic.

One should be able to argue that the costs of citizenship should be reduced and we should make it as easy as possible for anyone who has been here for over five years for these reasons. Governments of all persuasions for quite a while have dealt with refugee and asylum seeker applications by granting this concept of indefinite leave to remain. If you are a man who has indefinite leave to remain married to a woman who has indefinite leave to remain, you both retain your original citizenship as do your children. What we now have, as Carolyn Johnson very clearly explained, is a very large number of people in every constituency who live here, who are part of our communities but, effectively, are stateless and their children become even more stateless, and that cannot be in the best interests of public policy. It must be good public policy to try to ensure that those who

have lived in the United Kingdom for at least five years and who have made this their home have the opportunity of being integrated and becoming full members of our community and actually have a vote. If people have a vote you go and knock on their doors. If they do not have a vote they become invisible. I think there are very good grounds for arguing that citizenship for those who have been here for over five years should be as cost-effective as possible because we want to ensure that the next generation feels fully integrated and part of our society.

Can I personally testify as a Deputy Lieutenant in Oxfordshire that all those who come to citizenship ceremonies do so with enormous pride and they want to be citizens of the United Kingdom and subjects of the Crown, so it is in all of our interests that everyone becomes integrated into our community as quickly as possible and do not have barriers thrown in their way.

Revd Sarah Schofield (Lichfield): I am very grateful to our neighbours in the Diocese of Birmingham for this motion, which I fully support. I became aware of this issue when I commented during a particularly cold winter to a woman in my congregation as to how ill she had been looking for a few months. She told me that she needed to find £7,000 from her part-time minimum wage job to complete the citizenship process for her family. Unwilling to approach a loan shark, people make savings where they can, which on such a low income is not cutting back on luxuries.

Subsequently, in my other existence as a research student I became aware of a post-doctoral student in a subject we need, engineering - theology is possibly out for debate but we need engineers - who was looking for a first post specifically outside of the UK because she hoped to start a new family and she hoped to buy a house and did not want to have to factor in the cost of buying her way into membership of the country she lived in.

We certainly make financial profits on these fees, but as others have said, and will no doubt say, we risk losing much. At a time when we are trying to encourage a sense of belonging, commonality and citizenship, why place obstacles in the way of people who have lived here for years and paid much into the nation already both in tax but also in kind through community membership? They have demonstrated belonging.

As I thought about cohesion and community wellbeing and all these buzzwords that I come across a lot as a Near Neighbours trustee and being involved in a couple of Near Neighbours projects, I became aware of a certain irony that a number of the volunteers in my Near Neighbours project trying to build up common life and communality cannot afford to buy their way into the nation that they seek to build.

The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart): I just briefly want to pick up clause (b) which also mentions the Lords Spiritual and endorse everything that Sir Tony Baldry

has just said about the quality of the contributions that we have had which make excellent evidence and arguments for making the case in Parliament.

Can I also say in the other way of operating there are All-Party Parliamentary Groups which tend to detail and push issues of this kind and one of those is the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration, of which the Bishop of Oxford is a member. If you Google that you will find that the principles undergirding what we are saying today are already in writing and the responsibility of that group and that is a good channel for pursuing the issue that I hope we are going to support today.

Sir Tony also mentioned the importance of regarding people who want to stay here and are committed to staying here and have a right to stay here to feel at home. We might be reminded today of the Rabbi Sacks' book, *The Home we Build Together*, and moving from being in a mere hotel to being in a comfortable country house at a distance to becoming a full neighbour. I think that we are hearing today is giving proper evidence for parliamentary decisions to change the arrangements as they now stand.

The Chair: Synod, can I ask if anyone is standing who wishes to speak against the motion? Okay. I will tell you what we will do after Andrew Williams. Thank you.

Mr Andrew Williams (Coventry): Mr Chairman, thank you for calling me to make my maiden speech on this item. I would like to thank Ben for bringing this motion forward today and I am happy to support him.

While it is right that there should be a charge for those applying for citizenship, I think this should directly relate to the actual costs. I think we are right to go back to the Government and say, "Hang on, let's make the costs reflect what is reality in going through this process and not some arbitrary high figure".

We should also be clear that this is not debate about immigration or migration. These people are already here in Britain, they already speak English or possibly, in some cases, Welsh or Scots Gaelic. These people are already part of their communities, they are here, this is their adopted country and they want to become citizens of their adopted country. Why should they not want that? Being British is great, I am sure we all agree. We should be a welcoming country and want more people to come and join us in this wonderful thing of being British.

I am happy to support this motion and urge the whole Synod to do so.

A Speaker: Point of order: motion for closure on this debate.

The Chair: I think I might like to hear just one more speaker and then I would welcome that.

The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe (Rt Revd Dr Robert Innes): I want to draw Synod's attention to table 2 which shows comparison costs of citizenship applications in different countries. Many of the members of my diocese, much as they regard citizenship of Britain as great, are in fact applying for citizenship in the countries in which they live in the EU. The experience is a tough one. Even for highly educated people, the process of filling in all the paperwork, the language tests, learning the local culture is tough and you are in a vulnerable position when you are going for interviews, facing panels, completing the forms, getting things translated. It is a difficult process.

To charge people disproportionate fees for doing that simply staggers me. In the country in which I live, Belgium, it costs under €200 to make these applications. I cannot believe that we have allowed the Home Office to charge disproportionate fees for people in vulnerable positions who want to do something which is basically good, which is to integrate into the country in which they live.

I warmly support this motion. I am staggered that we have allowed the Home Office to get us into this position and urgently I would hope those in influence in Parliament can take steps very rapidly to put this right. I commend this motion to you.

A Speaker: Point of order: motion for closure on this item.

The Chair: Thank you, yes, that has my consent.

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

A Speaker: Point of order. Can we have a count of the whole Synod because I think the message will go out more strongly.

The Chair: Can we wait until we get to the vote? I am going to ask Ben to come and respond to the debate. He has up to five minutes.

Mr Ben Franks (Birmingham): Thank you very much, everyone, for the debate this morning. I was very pleased to see the amount of support we have got. We heard some unique experiences as well.

We heard from Carolyn, who has experience in family law, and has had that one-on-one relationship with people who are applying and mentioned her concerns over the fees for children. Especially with the experiences children have, they integrate quite well into society and for them not to feel full citizens could cause them lasting damage.

We heard from Nicholas Lebey who told his personal story of applying for citizenship with his child. Yes, it was a real injustice that happened, especially with the forfeiting of the fees for making small mistakes on the forms. He also told us how the support of the local

church was vital. Something that is sold as a privilege, should it really come at such high financial cost and should it not be more of a commitment?

We heard from Kat Alldread who said although we are not building a physical barrier here, as in other places, we are still building a barrier. The Church is here and is called to be a voice for the voiceless and that is something we need to remember.

Sir Tony Baldry, obviously you have experience in this area and you did mention that public policy should possibly be reviewed there. There was a wonderful suggestion that a transcript of the contributions we have had today is sent to the Commons Select Committee. I am sure they would find that probably difficult reading, but is that not what people are here for?

Thank you to Sarah Schofield as well who brought across some of the hardships that were encountered by some of those people who were saving for citizenship; those people who did not want to go to the unscrupulous lenders but had to make quite heavy sacrifices to save over a long period of time for their family to become citizens. We do risk losing people who are assets to our country. Maybe the buy-in to our nation should not be a financial one, it should be that buy-in of loyalty.

Thank you to the Bishop of Birmingham as well, especially in his role as Convenor of the Lords Spiritual, whose support will be vital, and his work in taking this forward, working out with his colleagues how this can be approached in the Upper House of Parliament.

Thank you to Andrew as well for reminding us that the charges should relate to the actual cost of processing the application. We have a history of being a welcoming nation. Maybe we need to review if we are showing that through our policy.

Thank you to the Bishop in Europe for the unique position you are in with experience of people going through the process in other countries. Maybe we need to explore what the value proposition is of our country and the Government could use that when it works further on policy.

Also, I bring you back to the hymn we sang this morning, "The Kingdom of God is justice and joy". Justice is a key issue that runs as a thread through this and relates to the Mark of Mission to challenge unjust structures of society.

I hope that you will agree that this motion does relate to that and it is an outworking of our faith in a very practical sense but we need to bring that to the attention of the whole country and to our Government to act on our behalf. Thank you.

The Chair: Members of Synod, I am going to order a count of the whole Synod on Item 17.

The vote on Item 17: In favour 310, against none, with no recorded abstentions.

The Chair: That motion

'That this Synod:

- (a) request the Archbishops' Council's Mission and Public Affairs Council to investigate the issues around the cost of applying for citizenship and to make recommendations to HM Government;*
- (b) encourage the Lords Spiritual actively to seek opportunities to address the level of citizenship fees in debate;*
- (c) urge parishes to raise the issue with their MP; and*
- (d) encourage parishes to continue to support those known to them who are struggling with the cost of citizenship fees without incurring debt and to signpost responsible lenders or local credit unions for advice.'*

was carried. I would like to thank Ben and the Birmingham Diocesan Synod for bringing this important motion to our attention. That concludes Item 17 and we will now pass on to the next item of business.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Birmingham (Rt Revd David Urquhart)* took the Chair at 10.01 am

ITEM 18

THE WORK OF THE ELECTIONS REVIEW GROUP: REPORT FROM THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE (GS 2075)

The Chair: We now come to Items 18 followed by Item 19 which are both connected with the work of the Elections Review Group. The paper for Item 18 is GS 2075 with a number of proposals to do with including online elections and composition of the House of Laity. For this item I am going to invite the Chair of the Business Committee, Canon Sue Booy, to move the motion at Item 18 "That the Synod do take note of this Report" and then it will be open for debate on the floor. There are no amendments that are in order for this item. Sue, would you please come and speak to the motion at Item 18. The speech limit is up to ten minutes.

Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): I beg to move

'That this Synod do take note of this Report.'

The sock drawer of General Synod. After the election of every new Synod, the Business Committee establishes an Elections Review Group. The task of the Group could be described as sorting out the black socks, you know those odd ones that scatter around your sock drawer, of all the different issues that get raised in connection with the elections. Some of those issues are very technical, but, ably advised by the Legal Office, the Elections Review Group sorts its way through them and reports back to the Business Committee. This is our opportunity to share that Report with you.

Whilst the last two ERGs have had their fair share of socks, they have also, as you will have seen from the Report, had some major issues to tackle. In the last quinquennium these were the electorate for the House of Laity, which has not been quite laid to rest yet, and the reform of the university special constituency.

In November 2013, the Synod agreed to move towards the introduction of online elections in time for the elections in 2020. This has formed a major and important part of the work for the current Elections Review Group. They have looked carefully into the possibilities and believe that subject to some issues of detail online elections should be introduced.

The Business Committee has endorsed their recommendation and the dioceses are fully supportive of the proposal to develop with Electoral Reform Services a web platform to conduct the whole electoral process from nominations through to count. Electoral Reform Services provide our current eSTV software and using a provider such as them gives us some assurance about the security of the online system. ERS run hundreds of shareholder elections, employee ballots, union ballots and so forth, and the system is tried and tested and, as far as anything is these days, known to be secure.

We do not underestimate the challenge of getting the necessary legislation in place in time for proper testing in selected dioceses before the starting pistol is fired for the 2020 elections, but we are confident that it is possible.

The ERG has recommended regional training for diocesan teams in order to ensure that the new system can have a good and confident start, and the Business Committee is particularly keen to ensure that this happens.

Members will see from the Financial Memorandum, the Seventh Notice Paper, the green one, how much we anticipate dioceses will save once online elections are in place. However, we know that not everyone has an email address or access to the internet, so we shall have to ensure that it is possible to participate in elections in the good old pen and paper manner. However, we intend online elections to be the default position from 2020, so those who do not have access to the internet or simply do not wish to participate online will need to opt out of the online system in order to participate.

The cost per elector will be affected by a number of factors. These include the total number of electors and the number of electors who choose to opt out of the online system. However, the per capita cost of elections will certainly fall and I would really want to encourage dioceses in their own interests to rise to the challenge and to be as persuasive and also to find ways of being facilitative for people to participate in these elections online.

I have majored on this because I am not sure how fruitful a discussion we could have about other issues that are lurking in the sock drawer part of the Report, but, as ever, I am willing and delighted to be surprised if you have other issues to raise.

Most importantly, I want to express my gratitude and my admiration for their tenacity to Clive Scowen, who has chaired the Group, and the other members of the ERG, Joyce Jones and Anne Foreman, for whom as members of the Business Committee service could be regarded as something of an occupational hazard, and to Philip French and Geoffrey Harbord, both of whom allowed themselves to be appointed to the Electoral Review Group, and as ever to the staff team for their support in preparing this Report. I commend it to you and trust that you will be kind enough to take note.

The Chair: The floor is now open for debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford): There are just a couple of points that I want to make. The first is that I am very reassured to hear that the needs of those who are not able to use online methods have been taken into account. I think we sometimes forget just how many older people there are who either do not use the internet at all or struggle with using things they are not familiar with. More times than I want to remember I have had to talk people through how to respond to a Doodle poll because it is not obvious to them when they get an email what they have to do with it. These are not people who are stupid, they are just old and are not used to these things; they have not grown up with them. I think that is very important. Particularly, if we were to change the electorate we could have more older and potentially digitally excluded people within that, so that could become a bigger issue. I would plead that whatever the method is for people to opt out of digital elections and into paper-based elections that that should be made as easy as possible and it goes without saying that it should not require doing anything online in order to opt out. That was my first point.

My second point is perhaps on one of the socks that has been left in the bottom of the drawer. That is about the question of diocesan officials lobbying on behalf of certain candidates. I did hear - obviously I am not going to name the individual - a case where a candidate had sensible reasons for believing that their diocesan bishop had been privately briefing against them. That raises the question of diocesan officials and, indeed, senior staff briefing against candidates as well as in favour of them. Whether or not that situation happens as it was recounted to me, I think it would be helpful if the wording could

be changed so it did not just refer to people briefing in favour or appearing to support particular candidates but could be couched more generally in terms of neutrality. Thank you.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): Mr Chairman, members of Synod, I hope we take note of this Report. This is the first “take note” debate that we will have had since the Report of the Bishops on GS 2055.

What I want to highlight is an important issue which is not included in this Report but can be considered by the Revision Committee who are looking at the Church Representation, Ecumenical Relations and Ministers Measure, and that is the current imbalance of representation between the two Provinces of York and Canterbury. Let me just give you the figures. At present, the Church Representation Rules require that the seats in the House of Laity be distributed as near as possible in the proportions 70% to Canterbury and 30% to York. What that means in practice is that there is a skew in favour of the Province of York. On the basis of the figures that we used for the 2015 election, the position is as follows (and these are the extremes): the Diocese of Carlisle with 17,674 electoral roll members have four members of the House of Laity at this Synod; the Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich, which I represent, with 20,053 electoral roll members in 2015 has three members of the House of Laity. That means that in the Diocese of Carlisle, one member of this Synod represents 4,441 electoral roll members. In Suffolk it is one to 6,684.

It seems to me that is an unfair imbalance. It is one which can be corrected. It is a matter which is being dealt with and should be dealt with, I suggest, by the Revision Committee looking at the Church Representation Measure because that Measure, as you know from the debate in February involves a complete rewrite of the Church Representation Rules.

As it stands, Rule 44(4)(a) in the Schedule to the draft Measure repeats the 70/30 split. Members of Synod, I suggest that should be looked at again and brought back in due course to this Synod when the Revision Committee report, and that imbalance should be corrected so that there is even representation across the whole of England. Thank you.

The Chair: After this speech I am going to see if the speech limit might be reduced to three minutes.

Mrs Carolyn Graham (Guildford): Thank you for calling me. It will not take five minutes. I thank the Elections Review Group for their work. I support their report.

I just want to draw some attention to one issue on online hustings, which is where offensive material has appeared and been published as part of the online hustings. I am going to ask the Group to look again at how this sort of issue can be dealt with. I accept that it is clearly not appropriate to censor candidates' responses, and it is important that electors know what the candidates think about things, but it is important that the Church

is a place where people know they are going to feel safe and accepted and that not only the people inside the Church know that but people outside the Church, browsing websites, do not get the contrary impression.

The difference between traditional and online hustings is that with traditional hustings people are unlikely to stumble across them and, if they do stumble across them and hear something that upsets them, there is likely to be someone there who can support them, whereas with online hustings any member of the public can read them, whether they are browsing the diocesan website or just using a search engine, putting in relevant words and stumbling on the material.

I do not have any preference as to online or traditional hustings. I am quite happy for online hustings to take place. We had both in our diocese last time and they were both well supported. However, there is an issue with how material is handled and I do not think a general disclaimer is really sufficient.

I want to give you an example of something that happened in our diocese at the last election and I am going to use the words of Sara who has given me her permission. She was not an elector although she is a Christian. She stumbled across something that upset her. I am not going to tell you about the material, but I will give you part of her email to the diocese where she asked why the diocese was not moderating this material. She said: "I just wanted to let you know that I found the response very hurtful. There is a clear inference that LGBTI Christians like myself pose a danger to children. I think the candidate could express his support for traditional teachings without unsubstantiated words that are so damaging. I only returned to church two or three years ago as I always feared not being safeguarded from extreme accusations, hence I do not have the thick skin that many people have developed when facing such words, but I do not think average people like myself should have to".

The diocese responded kindly and explained how it moderated questions but not answers. Sara was still upset. She wrote to me. She said she was: "...extremely upset that the diocese has no safeguards for people against insinuations that they are a risk to children. Surely the diocese had some responsibility when providing a platform to people who are expressing unsubstantiated extreme views. I wish this was an isolated incident, but it was words similar to this said to me personally about 15 years ago insinuating that I was a risk to children and that I was an abomination which led to me being driven out of the church".

Clearly, in a democratic process people must answer questions as they wish, within the bounds of legality - I am not challenging that - and electors, as I have said, must know their views, but this material is published on the diocesan website, where it can hurt people and drive away vulnerable people. I am going to ask the Group to see if there are any other options they can think of that might prevent this. Some suggestions might involve emailing responses directly to the electors or putting this material on a password-

protected section of the website. You may have other ideas. I suggest that we cannot simply put this material on the diocesan website where anyone can stumble across it.

I contacted Sara a few days ago asking if I could refer to her emails, and she gave permission, and she added - and I think her words are the best - "In simple terms, I still feel vulnerable and anxious in church. These feelings are only made worse when you know the Church chooses to have no safeguards for people like me, preferring to protect those who can be so horrible by simple inaction." I think the Church has gone some way to allay her fears, but I think it is important that we do take responsibility for material published on our websites. I would ask the Group to look again at how this can be dealt with. Thank you.

The Chair: The speech limit is now three minutes. After you, sir, then the Prolocutor.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Peter Kay (St Albans): One of the great glories of the Church is its diversity. Every Sunday it is a miracle as I look out, presiding at the Eucharist, at the diversity of people who come to the rail who would not be brought by any other means but by the love of Christ in different ways, different situations.

Having come from corporate life, it is also a source of incredible amazement to me how many of the greatest and most committed and most wonderful saints in God's Church do not have computers, do not have email accounts, do not really know how that all works. I am just thinking perhaps in my own deanery - a glorious, wonderful deanery, deanery synods are really exciting in our neck of the woods, which may not be the case for everybody - "Online elections? How would that work?"

I would just urge the Business Committee and the Review Group not to underestimate the challenge of this. I know that it has to be balanced. I know that it also has to be balanced by the needs of poor younger people who may be extremely bewildered by the idea of having to go to a Post Office, buy a stamp and go to that strange red metal thing and put a letter in. I know that there are wider issues here, but, as I say, thinking about my own context, thinking about actually the wide diversity of the Church of England up and down the country, not to underestimate the impact and what may be necessary in those electoral changes just to make sure that everybody is included in that. Thank you.

The Chair: The Prolocutor, followed by Tim Hind. After that I might be interested in a motion for closure.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): Thank you, Chair. I think one of the dangers of having a process which requires the review of an election every five years is that there is a danger of Groundhog Day coming round. I remember Mr Scowen, I think it was, in the last quinquennium making the speech that is now on the lips of Mr Lamming. I would

urge Mr Lamming to be careful. He is doing quite well in the shirt stakes at the moment, but he may find himself on the platform in five years' time responding to the very same point that he has just made.

I chaired the legislative process that followed from the Report of the Election Review Group in the last quinquennium. It is worth reminding members that the very point that Mr Lamming has made was made then and responded to. As we are about to look at the electorate of the House of Laity, I think we are also going to be asking the same question again.

I note in the Report that it does say that there are some members of Synod who considered the way that was dealt with unsatisfactory, although I cannot recall anyone actually saying that in the middle of it, but it does raise the question of when we do these processes how we keep the corporate memory so we do not come back in five years' time and hear Mr Lamming's speech on the lips of the next person who arrives and spots this discrepancy.

I wonder whether it would be useful in producing these reports to have some form of summary of what was considered and decided on in the previous quinquennium so we do not get to this situation and have the same argument and come to what I would imagine will be the same conclusion as we did then.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): I am very grateful to the Prolocutor for mentioning the sartorial elegance of the Chair of the Group that produced this. I noticed on social media that somebody made a mistake when describing the dress of somebody in Synod and they used the word "sartirical"! I leave that word for you. I think it is a wonderful word that has just been created this week.

In paragraph 6 it talks about the House of Laity elections and the way in which we are going to have a single transferable vote referendum on the way in which we might perform those elections. I am very pleased to see the word "advisory" so that we do not get into the problems that we had in June last year. The point I want to make is that, although we are about to think about the way in which the process is done, however the process is done, it needs to be backed up by good support. It really does not matter whether we go for universal suffrage on the one side for the House of Laity elections or by some form of electoral college, whether it be deanery synod - a separate deanery synod has been presented - a diocesan synod or members of the PCC, what is most important is that people are actually informed.

Therefore, the plea that I would make alongside any changes to the way in which we change the process is that dioceses across the country make sure that when it comes to the time for election there is good, solid support for those people who are going to make those decisions as to who the elected representatives for their diocese are and make sure

that the candidates that are going to be putting themselves forward have ample opportunity to make sure that their case is made honestly and justly through that process.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on this debate.

The Chair: Thank you very much. I am minded to hear this speech and perhaps one more and then I would then be grateful for that to be repeated.

Mrs Hannah Grivell (Derby): Thank you so much for bringing forward this Report and for looking at online elections. I have been waiting for this for years. If we could persuade the Government to do the same with the General Election, I think the disengaged 18 to 24 year olds would have a massive increase in vote and we would not have this disparaging thing.

What was fantastic in the 2015 elections to the Synod was there was a massive increase in young people and you have heard them as full voting members, not on the Youth Council. I know I was once on the Youth Council. I want to say again that I am definitely not any more, I am actually too old to be on it. Full voting members are now here in Synod. There are loads of us now. Unfortunately, young is sometimes classed as 50 years and under, which has increased on the Synod, which is fantastic.

If you want more 18 to 30 year olds, 18 to 40 year olds, or even 18 to 50 year olds, on this Synod, there are a number of things you can do. We made a move in February to change the February and November Synods to go over a Saturday. That is very helpful to me. I have taken annual leave for today. I only took one day of annual leave. I was not here on Friday because of that, because I do want a holiday with my husband this year.

Moving things online will help engage those 18-plus year olds, up to whatever age we are going to call old. Nobody is just old, by the way. Everyone is welcome. They just have a different understanding. To be fair, there are people way older than me who understand how technology works way more than I do. What I want to get across is that this is the right move to help engage us poor young people who have no idea what a letterbox is and it will engage us so much more.

There needs to be provision for people who do not want to use the internet or cannot use the internet for whatever reason. You need to consider as well how people who are blind might vote as well because online is not necessarily the best way. It may be the best way, we do not know. It is a way of working around it. I really hope that we can endorse and get moving on moving things online - online hustings, online voting - it is the way forward. I really commend this to you. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr Mason, and then I would be interested in hearing the mind of the Synod on a motion for closure.

Canon Dr John Mason (Chester): I just have a brief comment also related to the move to online. In paragraph 26 of the Report it talks about election addresses and there was a submission with the idea that they should only be made available online. I suspect what was driving that was something I have observed. In General Synod elections a couple of quinquennia ago there were some people who had the resources to be able to fund the posting of their own addresses to their whole constituency. That seemed to me to provide an unfair advantage to people who had the resources against those who did not.

The Group says that it feels that this problem will fall away should we move to an online system. However, as we have just heard, to those who are temporally challenged and others who may find it difficult to go online this will mean that there will still be an element of paper to the elections. I wonder if the Group should not be a little bit more positive about stating that there will be some way of addressing the problem of still having people submit things in paper because they have the privilege of their own resources. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on this debate.

The Chair: Thank you. I would like to test the mind of Synod. There is a motion for closure.

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

The Chair: That is clearly carried. Sue Booy to reply, please. Up to five minutes.

Revd Canon Sue Booy (Oxford): I will never make jokes about sock drawers again! Prudence, thank you for your comments, and thank you particularly for the kind of facilitation you have offered to other people that I think I was trying to hint at in my initial speech, that deaneries, like those of Mr Kay, will be offering to people who need help to vote online. Perhaps you could have a voting coffee evening where someone brings a computer and everyone can enjoy themselves voting. Start a new culture! We really do hope that dioceses and deaneries will encourage.

That does not mean that there is any intention at all, and I really want to reassure you about this most strongly, to force people who have a preference and desire to vote in the original paper way to stop that. Every effort will be made to make sure that that happens, but it is also an opportunity to encourage others.

Prudence, you also raised the issue of diocesan officials lobbying on behalf of candidates. It is always sad when we hear on the floor of Synod, as we did from Carolyn Graham, of things that we all know should not happen. We can revise the guidelines. As you all know, the responsibility for the conduct of elections lies with the diocese and not with this Synod. However, there are guidelines regularly issued, and those are revised and looked

at with each quinquennium, and that has been noted. I would say to both of you that the guidelines will be looked at in the light of your comments.

Simon, as ever, you were speaking the notes that I had been making for myself to reply. We worked together on the last round of elections review and I would just say perhaps in response to you, because you have done the responding to everyone else, that there is of course a view that an issue does not go away because people feel that it is still important. It is important that Synod hears it but maybe also listens to the wisdom that says that we spent a lot of time unpicking those numbers and the ideas behind them at the end of the last quinquennium.

John Mason, if you vote by post then you will get your election addresses by post. Again, the issues around hustings and election material are really in the hands of dioceses.

Thank you, Hannah. It is wonderful to have you as full voting members of this Synod and the people who are becoming the community memory so that in years to come you will be able to unpack the sock drawers of election review and keep everybody else online. Thank you.

The Chair: The motion under Item 18 is “That the Synod do take note of this Report”.

The motion

‘That this Synod do take note of this Report.’

was put and carried on a show of hands.

ITEM 19

PRESENTATION BY THE ELECTIONS REVIEW GROUP

The Chair: That ends Item 18. We move on to Item 19. This is a presentation from the Elections Review Group under Standing Order 107. The presentation outlined the options for the electorate of the Synod’s House of Laity with a view to an informal ballot being conducted as to the preferred option. Those voting papers are on your seats and will be collected by means of a box on the information desk as you go, so do not leave them lying around. I am going to ask Mr Clive Scowen and his team to make a presentation. I expect they will explain this, but we are going to have a presentation briefly on each of the five options on the voting paper and I understand that there will be a comment for and a comment against on each of the options. Mr Scowen.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): Thank you, Chairman. Can I just say that our team is not quite complete. If the last member of the team would like to join us on the platform, that would be really helpful.

As we have heard, Elections Review Group in the last quinquennium conducted a review of the electorate for the House of Laity and explored the pros and cons of the current system and four potential options for change. The Business Committee recommended to Synod that one of those alternatives be adopted, but the options themselves were never presented and explained to Synod. The debate on the motion to give effect to the recommendation was begun in York and then adjourned and resumed four months later in London. In the end Synod did not accept the recommendation, but after a rather confused and fractured debate many felt that justice had not been done to Elections Review Group's work and that the options had not received proper synodical consideration. So this is unfinished business, in a way, from the last quinquennium which this quinquennium's Elections Review Group felt should be given its quietus.

This morning, I and other members of the Group, plus Debbie McIsaac, will be presenting those pros and cons, including the status quo, and they are all referred to in GS Misc 1164, which I am sure you have all read from cover to cover. After that there will be an opportunity for questions with which we will attempt to engage and answer. Finally, as the Chairman has said, the ballot paper that you have been given, and we ask you to perhaps wait to fill that in until you have heard all the presentation and the questions to rank in order of preference the different systems. If there is a consensus for change then the Business Committee will be asking the Archbishops' Council to bring forward the necessary changes.

We begin with the current system. Anne Foreman will present the arguments in favour and Philip French the arguments against.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter): Thank you. How scary is this! My first time up here. People who know me will know that I am not someone who is opposed to change. You cannot have a background in youth work or any other sort of campaigning and not be an advocate for change.

So why am I suggesting we keep to the system that we have? Well, if you have read, as I am sure you have, GS Misc 1164, then you will have noted that the paragraph outlining the reasons against lay members of deanery synods is much, much longer than that outlining the reasons for, but I want to say stay with this system but, most important, I want to improve it, in particular to increase the level of the turnout, which in our diocese was somewhere around 50 per cent. I am optimistic that it can be done.

The reason for my optimism is I think the rather tired old tale about the difficulty in filling vacancies on deanery synods has had its day. Things have changed since Bridge. It was sort of 20 years ago, after all. Like Peter Kay, if you have been to deanery synods lately, you will know that they are changing. Renewal and Reform is reaching them. They are becoming more open, more user-friendly. Of course there is still room for improvement, but no one who participated, as I did, in the recent National Deaneries Conference could be left in any doubt that deaneries have the needs of the parishes firmly

to the fore. Indeed, one of the motions here over this Synod started life in the parish and went to the deanery before coming to the diocese and then here.

As for the link with General Synod, I think we have to take some responsibility for ensuring that deanery synods are kept well informed through our reporting back, reporting in ways that generate interest, ways that will ensure a higher turnout at the next election, which is not too far away.

So stick with this system that we have. Do not burden our diocesan secretaries with the time and cost involved in implementing a new system, but work to continue to improve communication between deanery, diocese and General Synod so that interest is generated, the electors are well-informed and reports from General Synod are welcomed. Thank you.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): Bridge was 20 years ago. The Synodical Government Measure - the Measure under which this Synod was established - was nearly 50. It is that which defines the system of election via deanery synods to the General Synod for the laity. It is not something, I suggest, that we would invent now. I know if dear Archimandrite Ephraim was still with us he would tell me that 50 years, or 48 years as it is, is a very, very short time in the councils of the Church, but I would argue that it is high time for change. Deanery synods vary hugely in their commitment, their efficiency and their degree of engagement with the wider councils of the Church. To make the electorate for the General Synod a side product of appointing deanery synod members - often the last people to be appointed in an Annual General Meeting, when you have run out of other jobs that appear to be more interesting - seems to me fundamentally flawed.

It was said of Christopher Wren that if you wanted to see his monument then you should stand in St Paul's and look around you. If you want to see the monument of the present method of electing the House of Laity, look around you: we are predominantly white, middle-aged, middle class. Yes, the diversity is improving, but it could improve much more with a different electorate than members of the deanery synod. Thank you.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I almost forgot what I was doing! This is the case for a specially elected electoral college which was first proposed by Lord Bridge in his 1995 review of Synodical Government. I think it is an idea whose time has come.

The APCM would elect people as electors for diocesan and General Synod elections in proportion to the size of their electoral rolls and in accordance with a national scale which would ensure fairness between large and small churches. Bridge suggested one elector for every 50 on a roll, or part thereof, reckoning that at that level the cost would be roughly equal to that of the current system. However, with electronic voting, a considerably higher number of voters could be accommodated at little or no extra cost, so I would suggest one elector for every ten on the roll might be the right level and give a much higher degree

of granularity between different sizes of churches and a much wider range of participation as well in the process. Those electors would serve for three years but would not be ex officio members of any other body, although the qualification for being an elector would be the same as that for standing for the PCC or deanery synod and no doubt in many places there would be a lot of overlap. However, parishes would have the option to elect a third of them each year, as many currently do with their PCCs.

What are the advantages of this system? First, it is demonstrably fair. A direct proportion to electoral roll membership across the country would be ensured.

Secondly, every voter will have been elected to that role and we will not have the current system where you have members of diocesan synods or previous General Synod members being ex officio voters.

Thirdly, those elected will be active members of their churches but not necessarily committee or synodical people.

Fourthly, because it does not carry with it membership of anything else, a much wider range of people are likely to offer themselves; busy lay leaders who do not have time to serve on deanery synods, or maybe even on their PCC, but who exercise significant ministries in the church or are called to roles of leadership in their workplaces or some other sphere outside the church, and also young people and black and minority ethnic people, and indeed lots of people who are repelled by committee culture or the prospect of going to deanery synod but, nonetheless, have a legitimate right to expect to be represented in the synodical life of the church.

Similarly, because electors would not be ex officio on PCC or deanery synods, it enables fair representation without PCCs or deanery synods being swamped by large numbers of deanery synod members, which fair representation of larger churches currently necessitates. Those are the reasons I suggest that this is an idea whose time has come.

Revd Canon Geoffrey Harbord (Sheffield): Well, Synod and the Church as a whole is currently making progress with the Simplification agenda of the Renewal and Reform process. Whilst it may be, indeed, very attractive to envisage people elected by the annual parochial church meeting with the sole task of electing the House of Laity, I want to suggest that we may here be choosing a bit of complexity and not simplification.

The creation of an electoral college by every APCM would add an additional level to the synodical government process, a level which would, moreover, have no necessary connection with other levels such as the deanery and diocesan synods. It might be expected that those serving on deanery and diocesan synods, by that very fact, would have some fair acquaintance with issues of moment, a General Synod and in the Church generally. Well, this may but may very often not necessarily be the case with those elected from the APCM.

My experience over years as a parish priest I think may well resonate with that of others, in that it can be very difficult to persuade people to take on any offices in the Church at all. In trying to get people to become electors for this one purpose, without any other accompanying duties or further participation in synodical process, might well lead to a situation where those who put themselves forward and are elected will be those people interested, however mildly, in the synodical process.

Who would they be? Well, surely, those who are or who have been the deanery synod reps. We could often have a situation where a new level of complexity has been created to achieve what we already have under the present situation - hardly, I would suggest, simplification.

Mrs Debrah McIsaac (Salisbury): I am a member of the Diocese of Salisbury. I am here to suggest a few of the reasons why, if a change is needed to the electorate for the House of Laity of General Synod, the best option is to enfranchise the elected members of PCCs. That body, of course, includes churchwardens, secretaries, treasurers and deanery synod representatives who are themselves elected and, therefore, carry forward a representative mandate.

It enfranchises a large number of active lay leaders. After all, those willing to serve on a PCC demonstrate an ongoing commitment to the Church through this service. Many have a range of responsibilities and are involved in many aspects of Church life. Both as individuals and in a representative capacity, they are interested in and impacted by what happens here.

Actually, they seem to know quite a lot about Renewal and Reform. They certainly know at least as much we do about *Thy Kingdom Come* and have taken it up with great alacrity. I do not think it is fair to say that we - and I was a churchwarden for a long time - are not interested in wider Church affairs. Indeed, if the electorate became the elected members of the PCCs then it would forge a direct link between parishes and the General Synod, which might be a very good thing indeed.

They are certainly not single-issue people. Can you actually imagine anybody becoming a member of a PCC just to become an elector to the General Synod? There is, however, a remote but distinct possibility to promote a particular position were we to have a separate electorate for General Synod elections. I think that PCC members become quite adept at listening to the congregation and caring about the Church and its place in their communities. Members of PCCs are and represent the Gospel in context and we say a lot about wanting to contextualise the Gospel. Thank you.

Mrs Anne Foreman (Exeter): I am here to suggest that we do not go for this option. I think the option for PCC members is one that will be complicated to administer, it might not consist of the most appropriate people and it could be even less representative than

the status quo. I wonder how good the communication is in your diocese between the diocesan office and the PCC secretaries.

If an electoral college consisting of elected members of PCCs is opted for, then the communication will have to be very good indeed. The register of lay electors will need to be very accurate and up-to-date. What of the PCC members themselves? The commitment to be on your PCC is considerable and, by its very nature, that commitment is parochial. Their focus is serving their church and community, and deanery synod or diocesan synod may not be on their radar.

How equipped will they be to fulfil the purpose of General Synod, which was helpfully set out - if you need a reminder - in question 30 on Friday evening to pass measures to legislate by Canon to regulate relations with other churches, to make provisions for matters relating to doctrine and worship and to consider any other matters of religious or public interest.

I am not saying for a moment that PCC members are not capable of addressing any of those issues or may very well be interested in them. I am sure most of us here serve on our PCCs. It is just that PCC members who are committed enough in addition to their PCC membership to serve on the deanery or diocesan synod are far more likely to know the candidates who are standing, they are more likely to have an interest in wider Church affairs and more likely to be representative of the diocese as a whole.

Another disadvantage is that parishes with small electoral rolls would have a disproportionately high number of electors. This could be addressed if you had some sort of weighting based on electoral roll size, but designing and delivering that is not, I suggest, a prospect that would fill diocesan secretaries with delight. I say again, please do not go for this option. It will be complicated to administer. It might not consist of the most appropriate people. It might be even less representative than the status quo.

Revd Canon Geoffrey Harbord (Sheffield): I have been asked to give some reasons for the election to the House of Laity by members of diocesan synod. Well, when a solicitor appears before me in the magistrates' court and says the famous words, "My client instructs me to say", it is a fair indication that the advocate left to themselves would not say anything of the kind and is only doing their advocacy on sufferance or for the money.

I am almost tempted to say the Elections Review Group instructs me to say that there is a case to be put forward for the election of the House of Laity by lay members of diocesan synods, although this proposition received no support from the previous Elections Review Group or the Business Committee. Let the reader understand.

However, there are things to say here. Rather more than all the other suggested electorates for the House of Laity, we can perhaps say that the lay members of diocesan synods are likely, by their interest and participation at that level of synodical process, to

have a very good grasp of issues facing the Church and relevant to the elections to the House of Laity.

Moreover, it is likely, again, rather more than any of the other suggested electorates, that they will know the candidates who very probably will have already served on diocesan synod and, therefore, they will not be relying solely on the candidates' electoral addresses. It is true that the lay members of diocesan synods would be a smaller electorate than that produced by the other suggested methods, but there are some advantages to this.

A smaller electorate means that the elections would be cheaper and easier to administer. Moreover, it is pretty much very well-defined as to who diocesan synod members are. Whilst it is impossible on any of the suggested electoral methods to have a 100% accurate list of electors, it is probably the case that the list of diocesan synod members is less inaccurate than any of the others.

We could then say that this method pursues a Simplification agenda by creating administratively simpler and cheaper elections than with an electorate probably more engaged with and aware of the issues confronting the Church than any of the others, or so my client instructs me to say.

Revd Canon Joyce Jones (Leeds): Well, I have been instructed to give the case against diocesan synod members, but perhaps I can do that with a little more conviction than perhaps Geoffrey could. I wonder how many lay members of the Church of England know who their diocesan synod members are. You probably know them as you are *ex officio* members with them, but to most people in the parishes they are quite remote.

In my own deanery, there are three lay members and 17 parish churches, so very few will have a diocesan synod member in their local church. On the other hand, all these churches have deanery synod members, so everyone is likely to know a deanery synod member. The deanery synod members, of course, are likely to know them as well.

Deanery synod members are likely to represent and be aware of a much wider range of opinion in the Church than diocesan synod members and, therefore, in electing members of the General Synod are able to vote for people who represent that range. If diocesan synod members were to be the electors for General Synod, they will be two steps removed from the ordinary person in the pew rather than one step, as deanery synod members are.

If we are aiming to make Synod more representative of the Church as a whole and to enable people to engage in it more, this would be a backward step. People would have no sense that they were represented and it would be even more difficult to get people to engage with what is happening on Synod than it is at the moment. I would, therefore, suggest that this is not a good basis for the electorate for the House of Laity.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): Last one. We are nearly done. I will say this carefully for fear of unfortunate reporting: one woman's sock drawer is another man's cabinet of delights. Let us name some other things clearly. We do already have genuinely universal suffrage in the Church of England. We use to it elect churchwardens, holders of an office at least as important to the health of Church and nation as is membership of the General Synod.

That is not actually being suggested for the laity elections to General Synod. We are talking instead about members of church parochial electoral rolls, some 2% of our population, around a million people - less dauntingly, around 25,000 per diocese. There is a simple, compelling legitimacy to this method. It would be fair and it would be seen to be fair rather than relying on any form of indirect election.

It would connect the General Synod to the whole Church, opening up opportunity to mobile young people not already in deanery or diocesan structures and it would encourage a more diverse membership. Since the Bridge Commission reported 20 years ago, the digital revolution has transformed the practicality of managing both electoral rolls and elections online. The purported difficulties, both of candidates making themselves known and their views known to the electorate and of maintaining accurate rolls, are easily overstated.

The availability of diocesan websites, social media and a mobile phone in most people's pockets - and, yes, I do take the point that some people will need other methods; we need to be aware of digital exclusion - just makes the publicity very easy indeed. If the electoral roll system is broken, then it is broken for all of the methods we might think about because it underpins them all. If it is broken, let us make it visible and let us fix it.

I dare say, Adrian in our digital department would relish the challenge of an online electoral roll system which would give PCC secretaries the back-up of someone in the diocesan office. Let us fix that. One Church, one faith, one Lord. One person, one vote.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): There are, to my mind, three serious objections to the superficially attractive idea of universal suffrage. First, it would open the electorate to people who never attend church and play no part in its life because all that is required to be required on an electoral roll of a parish is to be baptized, to live in the parish, to be over 16 and to declare oneself to be a member of the Church of England. There is no requirement to be a regular or even occasional worshiper and no requirement for any involvement in Church life.

If confining the electorate to diocesan synod members sets the commitment bar too high, I suggest that this approach sets it far too low. Surely those who vote for the Church's governing body should actively participate in the life of the Church?

Secondly, it would be very open to abuse and manipulation by pressure groups who could, on a particular issue, try to pack electoral rolls with local people who have an interest in that issue but no interest at all in the Church and her wellbeing.

Thirdly, for this to work would require much more rigorous recordkeeping than many parishes can currently manage. Postal voting for such an electorate would be prohibitively expensive and so email addresses would be required to be collected for every electoral roll member and they would then have to be held centrally in dioceses.

It must be questionable whether the current system of volunteer electoral roll officers is adequate for this purpose, since many parishes would struggle to find anyone willing to discharge that considerably enlarged role. So, three reasons I suggest why universal suffrage, despite its obvious attractions, is not the right way to go. That concludes our presentation and, Chair, I imagine you will be asking for some questions.

The Chair: Under Standing Order 107(3) there is an opportunity for questions, but I must remind this Synod that this is not an opportunity for sharing your workings or anxieties or enthusiasms in public. This is simply an opportunity to ask questions for clarification to enable you to accept the invitation to vote on the papers in a few moments when this session is completed. Would anyone like to ask a question? I will take one or two at once and then ask for a response.

Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark): I just want to get some idea of what is going to happen next. As David Lamming has already mentioned, there is this comprehensive review of the Church Representation Rules going through the process. Is the plan to make whatever changes we are going to make or not and is it the plan to use that as the vehicle to go forward?

Very Revd Tim Barker (Channel Islands): Given that we do not have parochial church councils - that is one option that is ruled out in the Channel Islands - did the group consider whether churchwardens might be an appropriate electorate and, if so, why are they not on the list?

The Chair: I will take one more and then ask for a response to these first three.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): Thinking about universal suffrage and the way that that might be implemented, should that be the choice, am I right in thinking that the electoral roll officers have a duty to ensure that those people who do not qualify for continued presence on the electoral roll are to be removed periodically during the period of the electoral rolls' performance?

The Chair: Thank you. Could we have a response from the team, please?

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I think those three are for me. What happens next? Well, if

today's advisory referendum, as it was put, shows a desire for any particular form of change, the Business Committee will ask the Archbishops' Council to bring forward proposals. It could be that the process - I forget what the Measure is called - including the electoral roll, the new Church Representation Rules, will be able to consider that.

If you studied the proposed Church Representation Rules carefully, as I am sure everyone has, there is actually a provision in there for these sorts of matters to be dealt with by rules made by General Synod which are not part of the Church Representation Rules.

If the new Church Representation Rules go through as is currently proposed, there will be the opportunity for Synod to vary the electorate for the House of Laity without making a change to the Church Representation Rules themselves simply by a rule made under those rules. I hope that is clear? That, actually, is a simpler form of proceeding. It goes with Simplification and does not require the full procedure to amend those rules.

What we have put to you today are the options that were reported on in the last quinquennium by the last Elections Review Group. I am fairly confident that they did not consider churchwardens. They certainly did not report on it. The option was mentioned in the debate in the last quinquennium, but we felt that our task, really, was to enable the process that had been begun in the last quinquennium to be brought to fruition.

I have to say I can see a number of objections to having churchwardens as the sole electorate. For a start, there is no proportionality between sizes of churches. Again, people are churchwardens for an enormous variety of reasons and they may not be representative of their parishes in all respects. It may be because of the very particular skills that they have or the particular amount of time that they have that they are churchwardens, rather than because of their representativeness. To my mind, it is not a good option and certainly was not one that was reported on before.

Yes, as I understand it, there is a duty, an enduring duty for electoral roll officers to remove from the roll people who are no longer qualified because they have moved away or died or asked to be removed.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Revd Peter Kay (St Albans): As a rural vicar, I am intrigued by the idea of PCCs' membership, but a little bit concerned thinking about the way that local church polity has an impact, not least thinking that in terms of my PCC members I have 25 members, however my colleague in the next benefice down the road has a joint PCC which has only perhaps a dozen members but, of course, we have the same sorts of responsibilities as well. I am wondering whether any consideration has been given to what may be proportionality between those different types of local church governance.

Ms Sarah Tupling (Deaf Anglicans Together): Chairman, thank you for allowing me to

speak. The three of us observed the House of Laity meeting in the evening yesterday and, on observing that we thought, first, we could not be involved, of course, and, secondly, actually historically Deaf Anglicans together have never had the right to vote. Thirdly, and this is actually my question, do you think there will be an opportunity or a place to consider how we as Deaf Anglicans Together could participate in the election of the House of Laity? Is that a possibility for future?

Revd Dr Jason Roach (London): As we were discussing the arguments for and against electoral college, it sounded as if the argument against was that it was more complex. My question is, as we are deciding, if we are thinking about whether something is more complex or more just, which one do we put first?

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Scowen? Debbie is going to answer.

Mrs Debrah Mclsaac (Salisbury): The question relating to Church polity is, indeed, a very good one and it is one of the difficulties with elected members of PCCs. There are some certainties that officers will be elected and that can be determined. It is the members at large of the PCCs that gives rise to the variation. It is, nonetheless, the case that if you compare it to deanery synods, there are many parishes that do not take up their number of permitted seats on a deanery synod, so there is that vagary in practice there as well, but it is an issue.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): I regret I do not have the facility to sign but, with regard to Deaf Anglicans Together, obviously it is open for any member of any church to stand for election to the deanery synod currently and they would be eligible to be an elector under any of the systems that we have been talking about this morning.

Clearly, it has been possible for Deaf Anglicans Together to play a full role in the life of this Synod. It does, in the end, I suppose, depend on how much local facilitation there is for deaf people to be able to participate in the life of whatever body it is that does the electing. Clearly, if one had universal suffrage or the electoral college, the need for that facilitation would be rather less than if it involved being a member of another body.

The question of whether there should be a special constituency for Deaf Anglicans...

The question of whether there should be a special constituency for Deaf Anglicans was considered in the last quinquennium and it was decided that that was not appropriate. There were a number of other constituencies for which people were making a case, but the general view was that that was not, on balance, the right way to go.

Jason, my view is that justice should trump complexity. Clearly, there is a balance, and something that is so impossibly complex as to be unworkable is not just either. My suggestion is that the electoral college system in particular is not really very complex and justice certainly wins there, in my view, but Geoffrey may want to express a different view.

Revd Canon Geoffrey Harbord (Sheffield): My client may be instructing me to give a different view, and Synod must decide, but surely, in the end, justice must always trump whatever complexity. All the suggested possibilities have complexities of one sort or another, but when we are talking about representation in the House of Laity, I think Synod really should consider that justice must trump everything else.

The Chair: I am minded to take just three more questions. That lady there and is there anyone standing from the Northern Province? Come down and speak to us from the Northern Province and then Mr Oldham.

Ms Valerie Hallard (Carlisle): I am a deanery synod elected rep for my PCC which means I am an *ex officio* member. I imagine that means that there must be a number of deanery synod reps who would not be included in the electorate should we go for the PCC model, and I wanted to ask if that was the case.

Revd Eleanor Robertshaw (Sheffield): Having had the sad privilege to bury a number of my congregation since I have been in post, my question is: If we went to the electoral college system, what we would do when people who had been elected died? Would that be causing lots more work for me to be organising by-elections after obviously being sad that somebody had died?

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I am intrigued by the final one on our sheet which is all those entered on church electoral rolls. I am fully aware of the reservations that have been expressed but my question is this. This could be a major evangelical opportunity. If we were to raise the profile and talk about the Christian faith very visibly throughout the population, there could be one million electors here. Can you tell us what plans there will be for getting the publicity out there and telling the population what this is all about?

The Chair: Thank you very much. Can we have a response to those three questions in conclusion?

Mr Clive Scowen (London): As I understand it, deanery synod members, in the terms of what is being proposed here, count as elected members of the PCC because they are elected by the APCM just as the PCC members are, so I do not think there will a problem of deanery synod members being excluded if we went for the PCC option.

What do we do when people die? I suppose it would rather depend whether there was an election imminent. If you have had your APCM in the spring and a person sadly dies in June and there is a General Synod election in the autumn, I suppose you would probably have to have a by-election but, otherwise, if there was not an election imminent, I imagine you would simply leave it to the next APCM to fill the vacancy. In the great scheme of things, unless you are incredibly unfortunate, I do not think it is likely to be an onerous burden.

Let us all pray for revival and to have an electoral roll of many, many thousands. I do not myself think - and Philip may have a different view - that giving a vote to electoral roll members will in itself bring people to Christ, but I may be wrong.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): If only it would. I had rather hoped that electoral roll members have recognised the Lordship of Jesus Christ in their lives. I would say to Gavin, you are right, there would be an opportunity there, and I hope that with the digital team in Church House we could use electoral registration as a means to electing the General Synod to get some public and press interest.

The Chair: Can I remind you that in front on your table you have your voting paper. As I said earlier, it is a single transferable vote. Put 1 against your first preference, 2 against your second preference until you run out of preferences. It should be deposited in the information desk outside in the box available.

Meanwhile can I thank, on your behalf, all those behind me who have worked so hard to bring this presentation to us. As we conclude this item, there was the divinely inspired sport mentioned yesterday, but the Saturday morning result of a different sport was not mentioned. In electoral terms it was a draw but in moral and converting terms, I think we could probably regard it as a small victory. That concludes this item and we move on to Special Agenda Legislative Business which you will find on Order Paper V.

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu)* took the Chair at 11.26 am

SPECIAL AGENDA I

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 36 (GS 2029B)

DRAFT AMENDING CANON NO. 37 (GS 2029BB)

ITEM 507

The Chair: Members of Synod, we have now reached the Final Approval stage of Draft Amending Canon No. 36 and No. 37. Members, you will need draft Amending Canon GS 2029B and GS 2029BB and also the petition for Her Majesty's Royal Assent and Licence, GS 2029C and GS 2029CC.

As required by Standing Order 102, I declare on behalf of the Presidents, the Prolocutors of the Convocations and the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the House of Laity that the requirements of Article 7 of the Constitution have been accomplished in respect of draft Amending Canon No. 36. I now call upon the Bishop of St Albans to move Item 507, "That the Canon entitled "Amending Canon No. 36" be finally approved". The Bishop may

speaking for up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I beg to move

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 36” be finally approved.’

Members of Synod, please bear with me, I will try to be as concise and precise as possible, but I need to rehearse the process of getting here and what we are doing today.

Members will recall that what are now before the Synod as Amending Canons No. 36 and No. 37 were originally a single Amending Canon No. 36. It was introduced to give effect to two Resolutions, both the result of Private Member’s Motions that were passed by the Synod in the last quinquennium. The Revision Committee subsequently divided the original Amending Canon No. 36 so that it now deals with just one of those Resolutions whilst the other is given effect by Amending Canon No. 37.

The first of the Synod’s Resolutions concerned Canon B 8, which prescribes the form of vesture to be worn during services. The Synod asked for that Canon to be amended so that the forms of vesture it prescribes should become optional rather than mandatory. Much of the desire for this was based on missiological considerations of how we relate to a fast-changing culture. Amending Canon No. 36 makes a number of amendments to Canon B 8 to meet these objectives. First, in the case of Holy Communion, the minister will not have to wear a surplice or alb with scarf or stole if the minister has ascertained, by consultation with the PCC, that adopting some other form of dress will be acceptable and will benefit the mission of the Church in that parish.

Secondly, in the case of Morning and Evening Prayer on Sundays, the amendment is slightly different. That is because Canon B 8 as it stands already provides some flexibility in terms of what may be worn at these services. Currently, the minister must normally wear a surplice or alb with a scarf or stole at Morning or Evening Prayer on Sundays. That means he or she already has scope for not doing so on weekdays and occasionally on Sundays. Under the new provisions, the minister will be able, on a general basis, to adopt some other form of dress at Morning or Evening Prayer on Sundays. Again the test will be that the minister has ascertained, by consultation with the PCC, that doing so will be acceptable and will benefit the mission of the Church in the parish.

The requirement that the minister must have ascertained by consultation with the PCC that adopting some other form of dress would be acceptable was not contained in the Amending Canon in the form it took at the First Consideration stage. That requirement was added by the Revision Committee so that due weight was given to the acceptability to the laity of any proposals to dispense with the wearing of vesture. At the same time the Revision Committee also added a provision so that, in the event of disagreement between the minister and the PCC, the minister must refer the matter to the Bishop for directions.

Thirdly, Amending Canon No. 36 also makes new provision in relation to the occasional offices. The usual position is that the minister may adopt a form of dress other than one of the traditional forms of vesture if that has been agreed with the persons concerned. That would involve a discussion with the parents, or the candidate in the case of a baptism, with the couple in the case of a wedding, and with the family in the case of a funeral. However, when a baptism takes place during worship, for example during the parish Eucharist, the minister will not need to obtain the agreement of the persons concerned to dispense with the wearing of traditional vesture if that is the normal practice of the parish at the service in question.

The Amending Canon inserts a new paragraph into Canon B 8 to ensure that where traditional forms of vesture are dispensed with, the form of dress adopted by the minister must nevertheless be suitable for a minister of the Church of England officiating at divine service.

It is regrettable, I think, that it has taken time to get to this change - the Synod Resolution calling for these changes was passed back in February 2014 - but I also recognise that the legislative process has enabled substantial improvement and refinement of the original proposals. I believe the result is one which the whole breadth of the Church of England can embrace, and therefore I am happy to move this motion standing in my name.

The Chair. Item 507 is open for debate. May I remind members of Synod that under Standing Order 64, motions for the closure, the speech limit or next business are not in order in this debate. The item is open for debate.

Revd James Dudley-Smith (Bath & Wells): Chair, I spoke on this subject in February of this year and I just have one thing to add. Back then I said that I felt that the draft Amending Canon indicated a win for everybody, including those in my varied Deanery of Yeovil, and that it was appropriate in our generally less formal culture, although it hardly represents a revolution.

My principal reason for supporting the change is the need for flexibility in our mission to the nation. My view has not changed on any of those matters but I do, as I say, have one thing to add.

It is my prayer and hope, and in fact my expectation, that the permissions given by this Amending Canon will require clergy like me, and others who robe, to prepare ourselves to minister with yet further charity and consideration for those affected by our ministry: the PCC, the congregation, the people of the parish, the Bishop, the parents of the child, the marrying couple, the bereaved family. Under the prescribed conditions there will be a bit more choice for me, but it is a choice about how best to serve others. Part of I Corinthians 9 was quoted the other day. In that chapter the Apostle also says: "Though I am free and

belong to no one, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible". There is a choice and the choice the Apostle makes is to choose the good of others. That is when he says: "I become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some". He chooses for the good of others, and especially those currently outside of Christ's love and salvation, so let us do the same.

I think the term "vesture" through these debates may have seemed a little quaint to some of us, but it may, nonetheless, help us to recall that beautiful prayer which I hope we often sing: "Let holy charity mine outward vesture be, And lowliness become mine inner clothing", so it is for the sake of charity to others as well for our mission to a diverse nation. I support this motion.

Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford): Might I just clarify what the speech limit is?

The Chair: I will tell you when I have reduced it should there be more speakers. You have five minutes.

Revd Dr Andrew Atherstone (Oxford): Synod, I support this amendment to Canon B 8 because it is a permissive Measure for an already permissive Canon. Canon B 8 has been on the statute book now for 53 years. It was specifically designed to allow breadth, variety and local decision-making in the Church of England. You will remember that there were hundreds of parishes around the country, heirs of the Tractarian Revival, who wanted greater freedom in clerical dress for the sake of mission in their local areas. Technically, of course, their colourful dress code broke the law but the Church Assembly and the Houses of Parliament agreed a new permissive Canon to allow local clergy and PCCs to make local decisions about local mission.

Let me quote from the Second Church Estates Commissioner, Sir John Arbuthnot, introducing Canon B 8 before the House of Commons in 1964: "This is not a Measure for change. It is a Measure to bring the law into line with established practice. It is not a mandatory Measure, it is, rather, a permissive one, and in commending it to the House for approval I would just add that one of the great strengths of the Church of England is its tolerance". Then he went on to admit: "If given the choice of attending a service where the vestments were simple, or where they were more ornate, I would prefer the simple service every time, but I do not feel that it is up to me, who prefer simplicity, to deny more colourful vestments to those who find them helpful in their worship'.

You can read the full debate in *Hansard*. Canon B 8 as it stands is already a permissive Canon, throwing its arms open to a wide variety of authentic ways to express Anglican ministry and mission, and therefore it is entirely appropriate today, after more than half a century, that we extend the range of permission. The revisions on the table are very modest; they do not undermine Canon B 8 at all. In fact, they do precisely the opposite and are entirely in keeping with its original purpose.

When it comes to Anglican mission, one size does not fit all. We live in a wonderfully diverse nation, thousands of contrasting and vibrant cultural contexts up and down the land, and the people best equipped to decide on the most appropriate forms of mission in your parish are those who actually live and worship there, who understand your unique setting, led by your PCC and clergy.

Let us today grant local churches permission to make local choices for the sake of reaching local communities. We do not need identical carbon copies or cookie cutters imposed by central office.

When local doctrine is at stake, rigid uniformity in worship is a dangerous principle. It amounts to one half of the Church of England saying to the other half, "We don't want it in our parishes so you can't have it in yours". Canon B 8 as it stands models a much better approach of permission for local choice when it comes to clerical clothing. Let us support the revisions which simply increase that breadth of provision for an already permissive Canon.

The Chair: Sir, come down, please, following the Archdeacon of London. The Archdeacon of London is dressed in that way not because it is a new vesture for speaking; it is just that today there were chaplains and cadets services in the meeting, including the Synodical Secretary for the Convocation of Canterbury. That is why you are dressed like this, Sir, in case people wondered.

Ven. Luke Miller (London): Thank very much indeed for making the point. Synod, you will know by now that I am someone who quite enjoys dressing up in different ways! At the beginning when this Amending Canon was first brought forward I had some concerns, but I think we are now in a much better place, and in a place where we can all joyfully accept the new permissions that are being given. I had concerns because I felt that there were moments perhaps when we might have found ourselves in a position where themed weddings might have suddenly been imposed. I have heard a story of a priest who was asked to wear a purple stole to a wedding - and those of you who do not do coloured dressing-up in church should know that is the sort of thing worn at a funeral most of the time - because purple was the colour the bridesmaids would be wearing. Had we found ourselves in a position where clergy might have come under that sort of pressure in ways that would have undermined mission and have led us not to the solemnity of divine worship but into places of even deeper foolishness than sometimes some of us find ourselves anyway, that would have been a difficult thing.

Some people have raised issues around safeguarding which I do not think we need too much to worry about. There are many people in positions of authority in our churches who do not have a vesture; church wardens would be an obvious example.

I think we can say positively, and should do, that one of the positive reasons for forms of vesture is that they reduce, as do all forms of uniform, the individuality of the person who

is wearing them and allow us to focus not on the individual but on the One whom we all attempt to proclaim. We are now in a place where we are able joyfully to accept these Amending Canons, and I hope very much that we can do so. I would also say, returning to a naval theme, it would help me as an Archdeacon occasionally not to have to do the Nelson thing and not see what I am looking at.

Revd Alistair McHaffie (Blackburn): We have already emphasised and mentioned the informality that we now have in our society. When I was a child I always called my parents' friends by "Mr and Mrs Surname" or "Uncle or Auntie Christian name" whereas today all my friends' children and grandchildren call me simply "Alistair". My dad invariably wore a shirt and tie when he went out, even on his days off, and he still wears a shirt and tie. I tend to open-necked collar and jeans. Years ago, Archbishops of Canterbury would wear sensible black shoes at General Synod. However, this weekend we have seen our Archbishop in a pair of blue trainers. Is he frowning or smiling?

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): They are not trainers, they are walking shoes.

Revd Alistair McHaffie (Blackburn): I stand corrected; they are walking shoes. Whatever you call them, we have become far more informal in what we wear and how we address one another. The same has happened in many of our churches over a number of decades and all we are doing is simply reflecting the way that society has gone in terms of informality. By voting for this item, the first thing it will do is give our church and our parishes, our clergy and our PCCs, the option to be flexible, to be flexible enough to wear the right thing in the right context.

For the last 14 years, it has seemed right for me in my context not to wear robes at our worship services, but it is horses for courses. In my previous two parishes I almost always wore robes, and if I were to be appointed to another parish where, for the sake of the Gospel, it made more sense to wear robes, I would do so. In passing this legislation, as we have already said, we are not imposing anything on anyone. We are not imposing anything on any church. All we are doing is permission-giving. We are recognising that many hundreds of our churches have already dispensed with robes and we are going to give them permission to continue with our blessing, but also give permission for clergy and churches to be flexible so that clergy and PCCs can decide the most appropriate thing to be worn in their particular missional context. This legislation seems both timely and appropriate and I encourage you to vote in its favour.

Revd Bill Braviner (Durham): I am very pleased to hear that the person leading our Church in its pilgrimage has his walking shoes sorted. I think that is a good idea.

I want to support this motion, but I just want to say something that I think is very important and it is on the level of humility. I have come across quite a number of occasions where families, particularly for pastoral offices and things such as confirmations, would dearly

have loved the clergy officiating to have been robed but the tradition of the parish has not been that and therefore they have not been robed.

Paragraph 6(b) of the Canon talks about agreeing with the persons concerned, and I would just make a plea for clergy who prefer not to robe to be open to robing when it is actually best for the mission of the Church, as much as I would plead that those of us who prefer to robe would be prepared to dispense with that if it was getting in the way. It is that two-way humility I would like to encourage, but I would firmly support this motion.

Revd Professor Mark Chapman (Oxford): I spoke in the very first debate we had on this Canon. I think one of the important things is to remember what a Canon is for. Chiefly, a Canon is a point of last resort when people fall out with one another. Most of the time you do not need to enforce Canons, and my argument at the very beginning was that there was not much point in having a Canon that was completely unenforceable. One of the things I really welcome in the various stages that have come to this is that we now have a mechanism by which people can together decide on what is best for the mission of the Church, the mission of that particular service and come together to make that decision. There is now a formal mechanism to go through and if people do not go through that then, presumably, the Canon might be invoked if it needed to go any further. I really welcome this and I welcome the mechanism that makes it an enforceable Canon.

Revd Paul Ayers (Leeds): I just want to inject a slight note of caution. We are told that this is not about prescription but about making something optional. Whenever I hear that in relation to worship and liturgy and so on, I always want to ask the question, “Whose option are we talking about?” It is said that the minister must consult the PCC and ascertain that this will be acceptable. I just want to ask that question, acceptable to whom? I agree very much with the last speaker but one who urged us to have humility about those who are affected by it.

I have always taken the view that if it says “Church of England” on the label it ought to be Church of England in the bottle and parishioners have a right to expect Anglican worship in their parish churches. This applies to far more than just vesture; it applies to everything about liturgical compliance, which as a fairly new archdeacon I am discovering is something that I have to wrestle with. I think we just have to face the fact that sometimes one of the reasons that some parishioners do not go to church can be because of the people who do and the way that they conduct matters.

I am slightly concerned that this could be a recipe for a lot of pointless controversy and argument in PCCs where the minister may have an undue dominance, and I am concerned about the rights of the laity. I just wonder if those proposing this would like to say something about what assurance can be found that these concerns will not be realised. Thank you.

Revd Canon Rosie Harper (Oxford): I just wanted to comment on the fact that so far we have only heard from men and we have been talking about clergy frocks. Is this significant?

The Chair: Well, an Orthodox friend when we were on Odessa together said, “When men want to show they are more than men, they wear ladies’ clothes”. I see no one else standing. Bishop, will you please respond. You have got up to five minutes. I do not think you need it.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): Thank you very much, members of Synod. I do not think I need five minutes because basically there has been such huge support generally. I thought the point was helpful that James Dudley-Smith made about it is not about personal preference but more about how we choose to serve and trying to think about the people to whom we are ministering. I think that is a very helpful reminder.

The point that was made earlier by Paul Ayers about the word “acceptable”, it is very difficult to define that. It seems to be something about being generally acceptable to people generally in the parish, but if there is disagreement the Canon says it has to be referred to the Bishop who will, if necessary, consult and give some sort of guidance.

With those very brief comments, I do not think I need to do anything more other than to thank members of Synod for the various points that they have made.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Bishop. Because the Canon makes provision, as mentioned, in section 1(1) of the Church of England (Worship and Doctrine) Measure 1974, in order to be carried the motion for Final Approval requires a majority in each House of not less than two-thirds of those present and voting. The question is, “That the Canon entitled ‘Amending Canon No. 36’ be finally approved”. In accordance with Standing Order 37, I order a counted vote by Houses.

The vote on Item 507: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 18, against 3, with no recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, 104 in favour, 5 against, with 4 recorded abstentions. And in the House of Laity, 116 in favour, 8 against, with 7 recorded abstentions. The motion

‘That the Canon entitled “Amending Canon No. 36” be finally approved.’

was carried in all three Houses.

ITEM 508

The Chair: I now call upon the Bishop of St Albans to move Item 508, “That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence (GS 2029C) be adopted”.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I do so move.

The Chair: The Bishop has moved. Is there any debate? I see no one standing. This is a show of hands because it requires a simple majority.

The motion

*‘That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence (GS 2029C) be adopted’
was put and carried on a show of hands.*

ITEM 509

The Chair: That is clearly carried. We now come to the Final Approval stage of Amending Canon No. 37. I am required by Standing Order 102 to declare on behalf of the Presidents, the Prolocutors of the Convocations and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity that the requirements of Article 7 of the Constitution have been complied with in respect of drafting Amending Canon No. 37. I now call upon the Bishop of St Albans to move Item 509, “That the Canon entitled ‘Amending Canon No. 37’ be finally approved”. The Bishop may speak for up to ten minutes.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): Thank you. Anyone who is resident in a parish or who dies in a parish has a legal right of burial in the churchyard unless it has been closed by Order in Council. That right has been extended by statute to all those whose names are on the electoral roll at the time of death. The minister with cure of souls has a corresponding duty to officiate at a burial or cremation.

Under the pre-Reformation canon law, certain persons were refused Christian burial. That includes those who took their own lives while of sound mind, the excommunicate and the unbaptized. Those canonical provisions continued in force in England after the Reformation and remained in operation until the 19th century. The Burial Laws Amendment Act 1880 allowed a form of Christian service approved by the Bishop, albeit not to the burial service itself, to be used at the burial of a person who had committed suicide whilst of sound mind. In 1882, a further Act of Parliament made it lawful for the body of such a person to be buried in a churchyard. More recently, the Prayer Book (Further Provisions) Measure 1968 relaxed some of the requirements as to the service to be used in such cases.

Canon B 38 in its current form reflects matters as they were left in 1968. It is the minister’s duty to bury any deceased parishioners, including a person who has taken his own life while of sound mind, a person who is excommunicate or a person who is unbaptized, but the law provides that instead of using the normal funeral service, “The minister shall use at the burial such service as may be prescribed or approved by the Ordinary”.

The traditional attitude towards the burial of suicides reflected the belief that all suicide was a grave sin, but public attitudes had changed markedly by the second half of the last century as understandings of mental health had developed. A significant report from the Church of England's Board for Social Responsibility, published in 1959, noted that the approach in society at large was now that "a person who attempts suicide must be in a state of mental distress and therefore needs special sympathy and understanding". The Report endorsed that shift of attitude.

Common Worship: Pastoral Services now includes prayers after a suicide and more generally the strict requirements of Canon B 38 now appear in practice to be honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Even where suicide is suspected or confirmed, many clergy will use the normal burial service with few, if any, modifications.

So far as those who have not been baptized are concerned, *Common Worship: Pastoral Services* includes a theological note on the funeral of a child dying near the time of its birth which clearly assumes that in many cases a child whose funeral is taking place will not have been baptized. The Church has already acknowledged circumstances in which the funeral service may be used for the unbaptized.

In any case, it is not contemporary pastoral practice for clergy generally to enquire whether the deceased was baptized, so even though some two-thirds of infants born in the middle of the last century were baptized, it is highly likely that a significant proportion of the at least 3,300 funerals conducted each week by an Anglican minister using the normal funeral service are for those who were not baptized.

There is clearly, therefore, some tension between on the one hand canon law as expressed in B 38 and on the other the expectations about the use of funeral rites conveyed within contemporary Church of England liturgical provision and normal pastoral practice.

Amending Canon No. 37 seeks to address that tension. It amends Canon B 38 so that there will no longer be a general rule against using the burial service for those who take their own life while of sound mind or who die unbaptized. The form of service in the *Prayer Book* or *Common Worship* will be available in the ordinary way.

But there is a conscience clause for individual clergy. There may be cases, probably a very small number, where a minister would have a conscientious objection to using the usual form of service in two of the special cases which Canon B 38 currently addresses. That could arise, for example, where it is known that the deceased was avowedly not a Christian or where he or she had died as a result of assisted suicide. If the minister has a conscientious objection, she or he will have to notify the Bishop and use an alternative form of service which the Bishop has approved.

The obsolete exception for those who die having been declared excommunicate has been removed altogether.

With those introductory comments laid out before you, I am happy to move this motion before Synod.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. Item 509 is open for debate. May I remind members that under Standing Order 64 the motion for closure, the speech limit or next business are not in order in this debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Canon Gary Jenkins (Southwark): I think this is a wise and compassionate reform. When a close member of our family took his own life what I really discovered at that time was we needed the funeral; the family needed the funeral. The funeral was for the people left behind. It has made me feel increasingly that funerals, in fact, are always more for the living than the dead. In the case of suicide, I think families need the comfort of the Church's funeral ministry possibly more than in any other case, so I warmly support this change. Thank you.

Miss Debbie Buggs (London): I warmly support this motion but I want to say why I support it, which is different from why the Bishop has suggested we support it. He suggested that the Church is moving towards a more compassionate basis because we felt the pressure of society. I disagree with that. I support this motion because I think we are removing restrictions that were never found in the Bible in the first place. I support the motion.

Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham): I want to support the motion. I want to encourage people to be particularly compassionate even in those cases where the person has been of sound mind and has taken a decision to end their life. It is possible to argue that anyone who wants to end their own life is not of sound mind, but that is not always true; sometimes people do this for what they believe to be very sound and right reasons. Even if we profoundly disagree with what they have done, they still deserve our compassion, our care, our love and the funeral service that they could have. Thank you. I support the motion.

Mrs Wendy Coombey (Hereford): Since we started debating this we have also had a suicide death in our family. I cannot tell you how my family felt to have the love and care shown to us because there was no suggestion during the service that my brother had done anything that deserved condemnation, and there were 600 people who attended his funeral. For us to have been able to share the care of the Church with those people and to have members of my family who were not Christians but came to us afterwards and said how much they had valued it. I did not expect to speak today and I was not sure if I could speak without getting upset.

Please support this motion. I cannot tell you what it does in terms of our mission and the love and care we show to our communities. Thank you.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Mr David Lamming (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich): I too have experienced a suicide in the family; my father's brother committed suicide some 40 years ago. I do not remember much about the funeral. I think it was held at a crematorium down in Wiltshire.

What I want to say particularly is having attended the Life Events workshop the other day, to see the opportunities for evangelism that there are in life events and to see the statistics of the numbers of people who attend funerals and the contact that we have, this is an opportunity to show Christ's love to people whatever the circumstances of the death of the person whose funeral is being conducted.

Ms Carrie Myers (Southwark): I just want to add my support to the motion to the many others who have spoken from personal experience. When we debated this previously, another younger member of Synod talked about its particular pertinence for younger people. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death for young people in this country.

When I was at university we lost a friend to suicide. He had had mental health issues, including alcohol addiction, for quite a long time. The trauma for the entire college community in responding to that death was huge. I cannot imagine any clergyperson at that point interrogating his family as to whether they believed he was of sound mind or restricting the options for his funeral if they thought that he might have been.

I just want to add my weight of support for this motion for those who have committed suicide and also for those of us who are involved in pastoral care for those who attempt suicide and recover from that, that the Church sends a message of pastoral care that this is not a grave sin but very often tied up with mental health issues. I support this.

The Chair: I see no one else standing. Bishop, you have got up to two minutes still. Thank you.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): Thank you very much, Chair. In the light of the fact that all six speakers were so supportive of everything in this, I do not think I need to respond individually other than to say thank you very much for your moving personal stories which, if you like, put a human face on the work that we are doing today.

The Chair: Thank you, Bishop. Because the Canon makes provision, as mentioned, in section 1(1) of the Church of England (Worship and Doctrine) Measure 1974, in order to be carried the motion for Final Approval requires a majority in each House of not less than two-thirds of those present and voting. The question is, "That the Canon entitled

‘Amending Canon No. 37’ be finally approved”. In accordance with Standing Order 37, I order a counted vote by Houses.

The vote on Item 509: In the House of Bishops, those in favour 21, none against, with no recorded abstentions. In the House of Clergy, those in favour 125, none against, with 1 recorded abstention. And in the House of Laity, 132 in favour, 1 against, with no recorded abstentions. The motion

‘That the Canon entitled ‘Amending Canon No. 37’ be finally approved’

was carried in all three Houses.

ITEM 510

The Chair: I now call upon the Bishop of St Albans to move Item 510 “That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence (GS 2029CC) be adopted”.

The Bishop of St Albans (Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith): I do so move.

The Chair: Is there any debate? Since this is required simply by a simple majority, those in favour please show.

The motion

‘That the petition for Her Majesty’s Royal Assent and Licence (GS 2029CC) be adopted’

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is clearly carried. The petition will be accordingly presented to Her Majesty the Queen. That concludes the items of business relating to amending Canon Nos. 36 and 37. Since we have still a little bit of time before lunch, I suggest that Item 6 on the Church Commissioners’ Annual Report be taken before we rise for lunch. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR *Ven. Pete Spiers (Liverpool)* took the Chair at 12.17 pm.

ITEM 6

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

The Chair: Members of Synod, we are looking at Item 6, the Annual Report of the Church Commissioners. We have just 12 or 13 minutes before lunch. I call upon the Bishop of Manchester, Deputy Chair of the Church Commissioners, to make his presentation.

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker): Thank you, Chairman, and thank you to the Business Committee for finding this small slot within the agenda for us. I will speak very briefly and I hope that will give the opportunity, Chairman, for a couple of questions.

By the end of 2016 the fund was worth some £7.9 billion. In reporting that figure I want to pay tribute to the Assets Committee members, our staff, our various professional advisers, and of course our recently retired First Church Estates Commissioner Sir Andreas Whittam Smith. He led for 15 years with wisdom, courage and diligence. On his watch the fund grew from £3.5 billion to £7.9 billion after the expenditure of £3 billion in support of the mission and ministry of the Church. We are already missing him enormously, but are delighted with the announcement from Downing Street that Loretta Minghella, currently CEO of Christian Aid, will succeed Sir Andreas in November. We look forward very much to working with her. Our total return last year was 17.1 per cent, but I should remind Synod of Sir Andreas's warning that we should not expect future returns to be at current levels given a whole range of political and economic uncertainties.

We have achieved these results operating within our ethical investment framework. It is a welcome and necessary part of our work. For an institution like the Church, we can - and should - be ethical, but more than this, as a large investor, we, sometimes in league with other investors, are able to speak with an influential voice. We prefer engagement to disinvestment, though we have disinvested where companies have failed to respond to engagement. We recently had a particular success persuading ExxonMobil shareholders to urge the company to improve its disclosure of the impact of its climate change policies. We got a 62% shareholder vote.

I also want to make special mention of our timber portfolio. We are, I think, the largest owner of private commercial forestry in the UK.

The real bottom line is this. Investment only matters because it translates into money that can be made available to support the Church's mission. Money is the means and not the end. We have made available Strategic Development Funding via the Archbishops' Council. Already £15 million has been awarded between 2014 and 2016, supporting 24 projects in 20 dioceses.

Crucially, we, with the Council, have changed the way that we distribute funds. It is now much more intentionally focused on need and on opportunities for growth. It is overseen by a new Strategic Investment Board. No longer formulaic, we are now investing strategically in the reversal of decline, in building on growth, in mutual learning and equipping the Church for the future. All of this supports the ongoing Renewal and Reform agenda which Synod has itself repeatedly supported and endorsed.

I do need to say that these excellent investment returns do not mean there is lots more cash available to distribute. First and foremost, we must continue to meet our pension obligations. That was £122 million last year. The actuaries then judge how much money

can be made available sustainably to support other purposes. It is done in a smooth way so the Church does not feel bumps in the road if we have a few bad years, but neither does a windfall appear if we have a few good years.

We do other things, of course, besides asset management and distribution. There is not time this morning to talk about the work of the Mission and Pastoral Committee, bishoprics and cathedrals and church buildings, but they are also a vital part of the mission and ministry of the Church. I commend the Commissioners' Annual Report to Synod.

The Chair: Members of Synod, I would also like to welcome to the stage Andrew Brown, Matt Chamberlain and Ian Theodoreson from the Church Commissioners, who may answer any of the questions that people have. The Business Committee has said that there will be time for questions. We do not have very long. If you would like to ask a question, please stand. Nigel Bacon and Penny Allen, I think.

Mr Nigel Bacon (Lincoln): Thank you for calling me. As the Bishop mentioned, an important call on the Church Commissioners' finances is providing for clergy pensions, but this is an historical provision and sadly all good things must come to an end and, as people die, the call on the pension fund will, as I understand it, reduce. I am interested in knowing what plans, if any, the Church Commissioners have for applying the funds released and actually what that rate of release of funds is likely to be over, say, the next ten years. Thank you.

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker): Thank you, Mr Bacon, for your question. The money that is going on pensions is fully accounted for; the actuaries take it all into account. It is not the case that when we stop spending that money - and it will take many years for that to dwindle down to nothing as people do have a habit of living a decent long time - that creates extra funds that we can distribute, that is already taken into account. We are a long-term investment body and we have already managed that into the system. Currently I think about 25% or so of the total assets of the Church Commissioners is allocated towards the historic pension liability that we have. That figure will continue to come down, but that does not actually create more money to release because that has already been taken full account of.

Revd Canon Priscilla White (Birmingham): My question may be very similar; I am not quite sure. The huge burden on dioceses, and particularly poor dioceses, of 39% of stipends to address the diocesan part of the pension deficit is crippling. Is there any way that the Church Commissioners can help?

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker): Thank you, Priscilla White, for that question, too. In theory, I suppose the Commissioners could seek powers to spend some money to defray other costs to clergy pensions, but that is robbing Peter to pay Paul. If we did use money on that, the money would not be available for other things. It would not create extra resource. Inevitably, given the way in which Commissioners' funds are

steered towards the areas of greatest need and the particular priorities for growth, that is what would be hit and so it would be probably robbing the poorest more than it would be robbing the wealthiest. It would be regressive, I think, rather than progressive if we were to do that. Thank you.

Mrs Sue Slater (Lincoln): I was interested in your Report, which said that you voted against chairs of nomination committees in instances when female representation was below 25% of the board. I wonder why you chose that percentage and not 50% and I wonder how you justify either of those percentages when the Church Commissioners themselves are predominantly male. Before you say that most of the people who get on to Church Commissioners are there because they are outside your control - I mean, they are nominated by outside bodies or they are ex officio - what are you proposing to do to change that?

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker): To some extent you have taken some of the words out of my mouth there. The fact is, members of Synod, it is people like you who elect the people who you want to serve on bodies like the Church Commissioners. Clearly, I know there is a very strong lead - a strong lead from the Archbishop of Canterbury in particular - to ensure that bodies in this Church that have leadership roles better reflect the range and diversity and variety of the make up of the Church of England as it is. Where there is the opportunity to do that, we are not shy in taking that opportunity, but these are matters that substantially lie outside of our control.

In terms of boards, in a sense any figure is arbitrary. Why 25%? Why 50%? In terms of our engagement and our voting, we are looking at what is realistically achievable and where we can exert influence through our engagement and creating targets that are demanding for the companies with whom we invest but are not so far beyond what is achievable in the foreseeable future as to become meaningless. The figures that are picked are to be stretching but not overstretching.

The Chair: Synod, we have time for one more question.

Mr Keith Cawdron (Liverpool): I think it seems appropriate that somebody on behalf of the Synod should express our deep congratulations and appreciation to the Church Commissioners for what they have achieved over this last year on behalf of the Church and its mission. Congratulations and our grateful thanks.

The Chair: That was not a question, so that is out of order, but the sentiments are well made.

The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker): I will see that that is reported to the staff and the Board of Governors and our professional advisers and colleagues. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you to the Bishop of Manchester for that presentation and that short opportunity for questions. It is now lunch. We will come back at 2.30 pm this afternoon. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Newcastle (Rt Revd Christine Hardman)* took the Chair at 2.30 pm.

ITEM 20

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL (GS 2058)

The Chair: Good afternoon, members of Synod. We now come to Item 20 on our Agenda, the Annual Report of the Archbishops' Council. This is a presentation under Standing Order 107. I am delighted to introduce Mrs Mary Chapman and the Revd Dr Ian Paul who are going to make a presentation. The presentation will be followed by a short time for questions.

Mrs Mary Chapman (ex officio): Good afternoon, Synod. May I start by thanking you for confirming my appointment yesterday because it allows me to share with you in a further two years of our work together in service of the Lord. I am very grateful.

In last year's presentation, I spoke about the purpose and structure, the funding and the responsibilities of the Council as an introduction for new members of Synod. We are not doing that today, but the same information is available in the Annual Report.

Last year too, I think I remember that I offered an aperitif to the budget that followed, but, today, Ian and I are going to offer you a sandwich between us as we highlight aspects of the Council's work and reaffirm our plans for this year. I am neither a mathematician nor an accountant. This may not reassure you greatly as I am also the Chair of the Audit Business Committee, but I promise you I focus on those things.

I do believe that numbers can paint such a vivid picture. I start with the summary income and expenditure charts because these two slides portray clearly the interconnectedness of the Church of England and its commitment to the redistribution of our resources in support of our aims. The two principal sources of income last year - and, I have to say, as always - were the Church Commissioners and the dioceses through the apportionment.

What we receive in grants from the historic endowment managed by the Commissioners is largely redistributed in grants to dioceses. What we receive from the apportionment is used to resource the work of the Council, which is also in support of parishes, dioceses, Bishops and the wider Church. That interconnectedness comes through strongly.

We also receive grants from other sources; most noticeably in 2016, the second tranche

of the First World War Centenary Cathedrals Repair Fund. The Council is acutely conscious of our responsibility to use these resources wisely. We are deeply grateful too for the generosity and sacrificial giving of Church members and for the partnership of the Church Commissioners and for their wonderful management and stewardship of our historic resources.

If we examine expenditure, you will see, and I hope you will be pleased, that the lion's share is devoted to selecting and resourcing for public ministry. That includes ministry support for low income dioceses, ministry training and clergy retirement housing.

Renewal and Reform has been the central emphasis for the Council's work, with a particular focus on ministry, on discipleship, on making better use of the Church's money, on new channels for evangelism and on seeking to involve the whole Church as together we pray and work to bring closer the coming of the Kingdom. Ian is going to highlight some of the key aspects of the year.

Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham): I will just be working through different pages of the report if you have it. You just might want to have those pages open in front of you. Of course, one of the key priorities is encouraging spiritual and numerical growth. As Mary has already mentioned, one of the things that we are conscious of, and on the Council we keep returning to, is the fact that we are not doing things in isolation.

We are working very much in partnership with the House of Bishops, but particularly in partnership with dioceses and with the local church in parishes up and down the country. One of the key focuses here has been research to provide information and insight to enable the resources to be deployed most effectively.

We have been developing materials and training to support dioceses and parishes, particularly related to mission opportunities at significant life events which we see expressed in the Marriage Project, funerals and baptism. Of course, one of our emphases, as always, has been on prayer and worship.

It has been fascinating for the last 12 to 18 months to see the way that different campaigns, particularly relating to some key moments in the life of the Church's year, have really caught the imagination, not just in parishes in the Church of England but internationally and interdenominationally as well; particularly the *Just Pray* campaign around Easter; *Thy Kingdom Come*; the Archbishop's encouragement for a global wave of prayer from Pentecost to Ascension; and the Christmas campaign, *Joy to the World*.

One of the other key focuses has been on developing resources for lay and ordained ministry. The Report, *Setting God's People Free*, with a team led by Matthew Frost, has been particularly exciting and we have discussed that previously in Synod. Developing discipleship and lay leadership; the contribution of leadership that lay people exercise in their lives Monday to Saturday. That seems really, again, to have captured the

imagination widely in the Church.

We have been finalising in 2016 and piloting new arrangements for the funding of ministerial education. Although there have been some serious questions and reflection on that, it feels very much as though we have been making progress. Obviously, we are reporting on what has happened in 2016, but the momentum for that has continued into the current year.

We have been working to support dioceses to strengthen vocations across the Church, including expanding the opportunities for the Ministry Experience Scheme for young people, and many of you will have been involved in that and seen the fruit of it.

One of the things that we cannot escape is the question of safeguarding and promoting a safer Church. Work has continued to build a stronger national approach to safeguarding, renewing both our culture and processes that protect the vulnerable, whilst also, as we are keenly aware of, continuing to respond to some grievous failures from the past.

I think an important part of this, and an important part of our visible accountability, has been the fact that the Archbishops' Council has commissioned in 2016, 20 independent diocesan safeguarding audits. This has got to be a key part of ensuring that we can be unconditionally welcoming to all people regardless of their circumstances.

Another key area - a vast area, really - of the Church's work has been contributing to the common good. Again, this is one where the Archbishops' Council has been working very much in partnership, particularly working in partnership with the House of Bishops and those Bishops who serve in the House of Lords, and enabling them to speak into the public square and in Parliament on a whole range of issues as diverse as child poverty, Sunday trading, gambling regulation, projects on refugee settlement, modern slavery and human trafficking, and the whole question of social cohesion.

We have supported the launch of the Just Finance Foundation, taking forward the Archbishop of Canterbury's initiative on responsible credit and lending. Staff from the Archbishops' Council have supported the continued work under the banner of Presence and Engagement, which we debated earlier in this Synod.

Of course, another enormous area of work is that of education. The Church continues to be a leading agent in the provision of primary and secondary education. We have seen the launch by the National Society of the Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership and the commitment to achieving a proportionate share of new free schools and academies under the Government's initiative within the Church School Portfolio.

One of the major assets of the Church is, of course, our church buildings. In addition to the First World War Centenary Fund, which Mary referred to earlier, from which 39

cathedrals have benefited - that is a fund of £20 million disbursed in 2016, adding to the £20 million previously disbursed - the Council's own fundraising efforts have also helped to award nearly £600,000 in grants to churches to ensure that buildings become less of a burden and more of an asset in facilitating mission and ministering. If you look in the Report there are some really interesting case studies of how that money has made a difference on the ground.

Another fascinating area of work has been engaging in the range of environmentally focused projects, including participating in the ecumenical Big Church Switch, encouraging churches and cathedrals to switch their energy suppliers to renewable sources. There is a lovely photo of Gloucester Cathedral which has become the first ancient cathedral to have its roof fully covered with solar panels.

Of course, a key part of our partnership is providing practical and financial support for the dioceses. I hope you enjoyed it. I think was very positive feedback for all the activity that we discussed on Saturday afternoon, again illustrating the vital partnership between the centre and dioceses and parishes. Parish resources, the information hub and helping to centralise buying have all been an important contribution to this; the Pathways Project, which is a new service enabling ministry transition, are all part of that.

During 2016 we began to really invest in and plan for development of digital communications. I know those of you who were in the session on that on Saturday afternoon were very excited by the possibilities. In 2016, we started to do the work on revising the central website and that has continued to have momentum this year and I think is going to have some very exciting results. We have offered advice and training in a variety of areas and the co-ordination of diocesan peer review.

Many of you here will have been involved in applications towards the Strategic Development Fund. This was just really taking off in 2016, so the total amount awarded was around £7.8 million. Again, there are some interesting examples in the Report of specific projects there. We have just listed a few of those here. Certainly, in Southwell & Nottingham, where I am, we have immediately benefited from that.

Again, that has generated a lot of momentum. This year, there will be about three times the amount of money disbursed in that. 2016 marked the last year of the long-established funding scheme and the transition to this way of doing it, where 50% of the funds from the Church Commissioners continue to go to the lowest income communities and the other 50% to support these strategic development initiatives underpinning diocesan strategies for growth. That is a fascinating example of a three or four-way collaboration between the Council, the Church Commissioners, House of Bishops and the dioceses.

All of this, you will be well aware, is supported by a vibrant programme of communications. Again, the report details give a flavour of this with some fascinating statistics. The *Daily Prayer* App now has over 12,000 monthly users, enough to fill St Paul's Cathedral five

times over - just a useful statistic to help us envision the power and the effect of these electronic communications.

Mrs Mary Chapman (ex officio): I hope you have been able to get a little sense from this, and a better sense from the report and from Council's contributions to this Synod, that the elements of Renewal and Reform that this Synod agreed over the last two years are being implemented with commitment and vigour.

We are conscious of the challenge and, indeed, the risks for the Council in terms of focus, prioritisation and resources. To address that, the Council has agreed a new set of objectives for the period 2017-2020. An indication of this is included in last year's Annual Report, but the full current version is in GS Misc 1169 from the Secretary General, which I hope you have to hand because I am not going to go through it in detail, it would take much too long.

For each of the objectives, we have developed an aim for 2020 and more specific aims for the current year in 2017. We are also deeply conscious of our limitations and have tried to concentrate on what the Council can deliver in terms of its support to and partnership with the wider Church.

The Archbishops' Council's staff team, led by William Nye, will do everything they can to fulfil the commitments the Council is making. They are a largely silent presence at Synod, but this is an opportunity to recognise and express gratitude for their contribution throughout the year.

Let us not kid ourselves, Synod, the Archbishops' Council will not achieve the headline objectives on its own because it does not lie within the Council's gift to bring about the scale of transformation that these objectives describe. I believe that if every person and organisation within the Church of England plays their part, through the infinite grace of God we will see the renewal that we need so that more people will come to know the love of God.

The Chair: Members of Synod, on your behalf, I would like to thank Mrs Mary Chapman and Dr Ian Paul for the presentation, helping us to understand a little more about the totality of the work of the Archbishops' Council. We now have a relatively short time, but some time, for questions. I hope, members of Synod, that if you are going to ask a question you will be as succinct as possible so that we can hear as many questions from as many people as possible. I will take the questions in groups of three.

Mr James Cary (Bath & Wells): Thank you, Chair, for calling me for my maiden question. This is not a speech, I cannot emphasise that enough. I am from the Diocese of Bath & Wells. It was in Wells Cathedral in November last year that I was thrilled to hear Archbishop Justin speak powerfully about his desire to make known the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and to speak of him specifically by name as often as possible. Especially in

media interviews, we really should do it more often. Our friends in the media hate it when we do that.

The Chair: Can we move to your question?

Mr James Cary (Bath & Wells): Yes. My question is, therefore, my reservation about the Report is that the name of Jesus occurs twice and, although the activities of the Report are excellent, we need to remember that we do these specifically for the name of the Lord Jesus.

The Chair: I am still waiting for your question.

Mr James Cary (Bath & Wells): Yes. My question is could future reports please give the name of the Lord Jesus slightly greater prominence to remind us of why we do these activities? That is all, thank you.

Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich): Thank you for the Report and the update. My question is also about strategic focus. Perhaps not so high, but still very important, the challenge of passing on our faith to younger generations has been shown to be highly significant by all the research we have been doing. We have got older congregations. We need to replace retiring clergy. Our research in anecdotal evidence shows that it is churches that work with young people that are growing and - I am coming to it, Chair - the research we most helpfully heard about on Sunday afternoon, or was it Saturday, also confirms that it is young people where evangelism is most effective. Looking at the objectives and the aims ---

The Chair: I really do need you to come to your question now.

Revd Dr Patrick Richmond (Norwich): Yes. Looking at the objectives and the aims, it seems that we have lost strategic focus on youth. There just is not a mention of it in places where there even was before. Why?

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): I am increasingly concerned about the way we arrange mutual support within the Church, which is often seen as a top-down process. There is a strong understanding of the biblical foundation for mutual support, but too often it feels imposed on the next layer down rather than joyful giving and receiving.

The Chair: Mr Oldham, can I have your question, please?

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): Would the Archbishops' Council consider how to encourage more engagement in mutual support, particularly by twinning donors and recipients, whether at diocesan level, deanery or parishes and, in due course, I hope, in cathedrals?

Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham): I am very happy to answer the first two

questions. James Cary, thank you very much for yours and we had discussion about that over lunch. I think my first reflection is that Jesus' name is mentioned as something to do with the genre of these kinds of reports.

We talk about discipleship; do we need to say they are disciples of Jesus? I do not know. We are talking about the prominence of evangelism; do we need to articulate this is evangelism so that people might come to faith in Jesus? I am not sure that is necessary and in a local church APCM Report, I do not know how much Jesus is mentioned explicitly?

Certainly, I am very excited by the fact that evangelism is the number one objective for the Council. I think it is an interesting question and we will bear it in mind for next year's report. The second question about evangelism amongst young people, I think, yes, certainly, we are very aware of that.

One of the discussions we did have, which perhaps is not reflected prominently in here - and we actually had a very animated and exciting discussion about it in the Council - was the issue of evangelism particularly amongst university students. That is an ongoing piece of work where we really feel as though there is a role that we can play as the Church of England in facilitating the working together of different agencies.

There are some very diverse agencies doing evangelism amongst university students. Some of them are Anglican. Others are not. There is a facilitation and co-ordination role there so that we can work together more effectively. I would also draw attention to, on page 18, the launch of the RE resource, *Understanding Christianity*.

Again, through the educational process I think we are really keen to see people engage, young people engage, in what it means actually to come to faith, particularly in the context of Church schools. That is certainly there even if it is not prominent as a heading. I am not sure I understood the third question, so I will leave that to Mary.

Mrs Mary Chapman (ex officio): Gavin, thank you very much for your question. I think I have grasped that you are asking about the potential for mutual support between dioceses without any intervention, help and support from the national Church. I think I have got that right. I would say that in terms of practical examples there are already a number. The Planned Giving scheme, for example, which was initiated by a diocese and has now been taken up by many, but so too the learning networks that have emerged out of the leadership training where people are coming together to grow together.

A third example would be some of the work that is coming from peer review where dioceses, following peer review, are getting ideas about who they might turn to across the country to draw on good examples of what is going on. That is from the practical perspective.

If you are - and I am not sure that you are - asking about whether one diocese could give something in terms of support to another financially in resourcing terms, I think that is a more complicated issue and I think it would need exploring.

We have taken a view within the Church as a whole over time and, when we agreed to the new arrangements for Resourcing the Future, that it would work through the giving of grants to the lowest income communities rather than necessarily the lowest income dioceses and then looking at funding, growth and development, also, with a focus on the poor.

We have adopted that as a strategy for financial redistribution. We have only just started it this year. I think we do need to give it a little bit of time to see the impact of it.

The Chair: These will be the last two questions.

Mr Philip French (Rochester): My question relates to information on pages 36 and 37 of the report on risks around information security and IT infrastructure and the existence, which I welcome, of a programme to investigate how the NCIs steward data systems and processes, clearly important given the work we are doing with digital. Are you satisfied that you have the resources and advice that you need to avoid the operational and reputational risks involved in information protection gone wrong, particularly given the advent of the European level General Data Protection Regulation in May last year replacing the 20 year-old Data Protection Act?

Mrs Penny Allen (Lichfield): This is about Strategic Development Funding. In applications for Strategic Development Funding, are you satisfied with the level of advice that is given to dioceses, given that some bids fail?

Mr William Nye (Secretary General): Thank you for your question about IT and data security. We have a single IT team in the national Church institutions which supports both the Archbishops' Council, the Church Commissioners and the Church of England Pensions Board and they have been developing their expertise in these areas.

There was a question earlier in this Synod on the General Data Protection Regulations and, as NCIs, we are working on those. We are also developing guidance which we can share with dioceses and parishes. Data security is the sort of area where I do not think we could ever say we are absolutely sure that we have got everything right. That is why it is on the risk register and that is why we are doing work on it, but we are actually building up our team to deal with those things. I can imagine why you have noted that that is an area of risk.

At the risk of tempting fate, I would say that in the recent various ransomware attacks, I am pleased to say that the IT team had been able to protect Church House and the NCIs' IT. I am just hoping that will not mean that we fall foul of the next one. On Strategic

Development Funding, the Strategic Investment Board is very conscious of the need to experiment and allow experiments and take account of things that might fail and use that as a learning opportunity.

The Chair. Thanks to the succinct questions and answers in that last section, I can take one more question and it needs to be really succinct, please.

Revd Canon Sally Gaze (Norwich): The question relates to the outcome indicators identified for the measuring of the progress of some of the Strategic Development Funding projects. Do these outcome indicators, which have already been identified - and I realise that we have not got the returns because you have not had time to get the returns back, but you identified the outcome indicators in advance - contain robust ways of measuring things like conversion and numbers of unchurched people participating?

Mrs Mary Chapman (ex officio): If I may, I will pick up, first, on the previous question relating to Strategic Development Funding, simply to say I think I would be worried if every proposal got through, particularly on the first application.

My point about being very conscious about how we use the resources that are entrusted to us means that we want to be sure that we are applying the criteria rigorously. I would say we want every diocese and, eventually, every application to succeed, and that is why there is quite a bit of investment in development of capacity, in giving advice and guidance to dioceses about how to structure their applications and how to think about their outcome indicators.

That takes me on to the second point, and the answer to your question is, in short, yes. The Council, together with the Church Commissioners, has spent a lot of time, supported by staff and by external advisers, coming to a conclusion about a sensible range of indicators that are measurable. It is the first time we have done it. It will be work in progress. It will be reviewed. We are setting up a joint funding/monitoring group between the Commissioners and the Council to take a broader overview of how all this is working.

Revd Dr Ian Paul (Southwell & Nottingham): Just a very brief comment. We also have some very specific analysis done by Philip James and his staff on one example of the Strategic Development Fund, which was resource church planting. The analysis actually looked at the makeup of congregations, how many of those came from transfer growth, how many came from dechurched and how many came from unchurched. That information is being made available more widely. You can also find an analysis of that on a widely read blog. I can direct that to you if you are interested afterwards.

The Chair. Thank you, Members of Synod for the questions, and thank you William, Mary and Ian for the answers. That now concludes Item 20 and we move to Item 21 on the agenda.

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Manchester (Rt Revd David Walker)* took the Chair at 3.02 pm

ITEM 21

THE ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL'S BUDGET (GS 2076)

The Chair. Synod, welcome to our next series of items. We have got eight things to deal with, Items 21 through to 28, that all relate to the Archbishops' Council budget and proposals for apportionment for 2018. It will be helpful if you can keep Order Paper V to hand, the yellow paper with all of that on. GS 2076 is the document that you will find it helpful to be able to refer to.

The way we are going to structure this, in theory Canon Spence could speak for ten minutes on each of these items, so what we thought rather than that, with your general permission, we would like for him to talk for up to 15 minutes in a general introduction and when we get to Items 22, et cetera, then he will move them pretty succinctly. Although Item 21 is a take note debate, I think it would be helpful for Canon Spence, so we are not having to worry about taking notes, if perhaps we could have three speeches at a time from the floor and then, with your general permission, Canon Spence to reply to those. That might structure the debate a little easier. I may even ask for people who put down to speak on particular themes within the budget to come together, so again it may be that a joint response to several questions will be possible. Is that okay, colleagues, in terms of how we are going to play this this afternoon? Thank you. I have done this with Canon Spence before. Some of you think it is our annual Morecambe and Wise outing or Little and Large. He may be Canon but I am definitely not Ball! Canon Spence, would you like to introduce the afternoon?

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): I might be Canon but I am also Bald, but there we are! It is a great pleasure to be here, I must say. You will notice I have even dressed for the occasion. My dear wife, Yvonne, who is up there in the gallery, has likened me to a potato - on the grounds that I am tastier with my jacket on.

You may have heard about the duck who walked across the pavement to the kerb and looked as if it was about to try to cross the road. A chicken rushed up and said, "Don't do that. If you try to cross the road you'll never hear the end of it". That is absolutely nothing to do with the budget, but it does serve the needs of the security guards who have apparently been quoted as saying they like it when I stand up because they have a laugh. They get no insight but they have a laugh.

Let us get on to the budget and it is clearly no laughing matter. I would like to start by showing you the budget in a slightly different way. In 2018 the Archbishops' Council will have responsibility for spending £104.7 million, £24.8 million of that coming in the funds going through to lower-income communities, through dioceses, subject to peer reviews and annual reports. £15.2 million of the transitional funding agreed by the Church

Commissioners is to wean dioceses off those most heavily dependent on Darlow, and £24.8 million of Strategic Development Funding, which has already been talked about and on which I am sure there will be more questions. That adds up to £64.8 million, in addition to which we have the £39.9 million of expenditure across Votes 1 to 5.

On the strategic funding piece, we started an experiment in 2014-16, being very clear that it has to be aligned to strategies developed by the dioceses. We do indeed have in the £74 million for spending over the next three years £6 million that is specifically earmarked for helping dioceses develop that strategic capacity, so, for instance, we can help Lichfield and other places get through their bids after the appropriate amount of enablement and facilitation.

We granted £50 million-worth of applications in 2014-16. We have done £20 million so far, but please do not confuse that with spending, because one of the things we are learning is just how long it takes in the gap between when the funds are agreed and when they come to be spent because of planning issues or recruitment or just the sheer work of project management.

The SDF funding assessment is carried out by the Strategic Investment Board, which I chair on your behalf, and it is very clear that we have real challenges: that we have to make sure that we work based on evidence, that we do have that strategic alignment at all times, and that we must carry on monitoring and reviewing the impacts to ensure that they are in line with the business case. It is a radically different departure for the Church of England and is being approached with the amount of care that should be devoted to it.

I always hope that we will enable and facilitate dioceses to have the success that they want, and success for me will come when all dioceses and all parts of the Church have, in the name of Jesus Christ, received funding because they have had successful applications.

Let us get back to that part of the budget that you know best in these debates which is Votes 1 to 5, totalling this year £39.9 million of expenditure, with £31.9 million being funded through apportionment; our calls on the dioceses. There is £8 million coming from other sources, and this is driven, of course, by items you have heard about a lot to do with evangelism and Reform and Renewal, offset by the operating efficiencies we continue to demand of the executive team.

If we look at the trend over the years from 2005 to 2010 up to the current year, an interesting pattern emerges. You will see Vote 1 going up by small amounts every year. That will change and we will come on to that. Since 2010, the operating budget has gone up by only 0.1% per annum. As the Government has learned to its cost, austerity can only continue for so long. This year we have had to accept a bigger increase. We will continue to push down heavily on every piece of excess we can find, but, equally, we need to realise that it cannot go on for ever and we need to invest.

In Vote 5 there you will see the continuing piece since 2010 of the synodical commitment to increase the funding for retired clergy housing by 5% per annum to 2020. Hopefully thereafter it will only go up in line with inflation.

You will see, of course, that overall the growth in the apportionment has been less than the various measures of the cost of living.

Let us look at Vote 1 and this great success that is coming through in 2017. In 2016, we failed to achieve the desired 10% growth in the number of new ordinands, but we are on track for 14.5% growth in September, with 543 new ordinands starting, which is great, but it is only the start of the story because we aspire next year to 597, a further 10% growth. Just look at the numbers below that for the total numbers in ordinand training, going up from last year 1,174 to this year 1,234 to next year 1,383. If we can pull that off, ladies and gentlemen, it tells you something of the great work being done in every diocese as they call out to vocations, by the Ministry Council team in creating the capacity to support them, but, above all, in the future of the Church of England, and I will keep saying it, serving Jesus in making sure that we have that ordained leadership; young, energetic to supplement and complement and eventually to take over from those clergy who are retiring. One of the great things about this year's numbers is the significant shift in the age profile, with significantly larger numbers of young women coming through, which had been a source of particular concern.

On the next line you will see the financial elements of this next year alone. The cost of Vote 1 goes up from £14.1 million to £15.2 million, it goes up £1 million in a year, which is actually more than the total increase in the apportionment which was requested in your budget. If you were to look at the Order Paper for this debate you would see that if the growth were to continue at this rate over the next few years, those annual increases would be £2 million and £3 million in 2019 and 2020, so these are big numbers.

Moving on to Votes 2 to 4, primarily driven here by increases in evangelism, where we are re-organising and having a director for evangelism; and Renewal and Reform, where we are going to have a director of Renewal and Reform, because William simply cannot do everything; and safeguarding, where we must carry on spending the money that we have to spend. We know we have to do it and we must make sure that it is spent to best effect and in liaison very closely with the dioceses on whom the ultimate responsibility must lie.

Then, as you have heard already, our desire to continue investing in the digital piece, all of these leading to increases overall in Votes 2 to 4. The assumption that underpins this is that there will be a very steady state in other areas of investment. We will keep them pinned down. We have worked on the assumption of inflation running at 2.5%. Who can tell where it will end up the way it is going at the moment. We have assumed that grants and missionary numbers will both stay flat. That is Votes 3 and 4. Thus the growth in

this particular element of the budget is coming in Vote 2.

Then Vote 5, as we have already said, we are nearing the end of our ten-year commitment to increase by 5% per annum the support for the CHARM scheme. We know the huge amount the Pension Board has done in making this scheme much more effective and cost-effective in supporting clergy. We will come in due course to consider what that means for beyond 2020 and what further support they will need.

We end up with a budget where we see total expenditure grow by £2.2 million (or 6%). That is funded, to a degree, by the amount we earn in operating income from different sources; by an element of capital drawdown - and we know we cannot keep doing that but we have been able to do it this year and indeed had to do it this year, because we could not yet open up other sources of funding - we will continue to benefit from rent relief under agreements we have in place with the Corporation of Church House and the Church Commissioners, who have been very generous in this area as well as in others, with £0.9 million of the £2.2 million growth in expenditure coming from the apportionment increase.

I am going to go and look beyond 2018. I do not want to scare you because I will come back to it after, but we can all see the issues that are coming down the line. We have the fact that we need to continue investing. We have the growth that we want to achieve in the things that we do. We have talked already about the fact that we cannot carry on drawing down on capital so we need to develop funding streams that overcome that. We have talked about the challenge that we will face in going with digital. The big elephant in the room is of course this growth in ordinand numbers, which we desperately want, and where I said earlier, and I probably skimmed over the slide, it is not just now about the growth in the bill for the training of the ordinands - the dioceses are already coping with the maintenance bills of over £5 million - but as more and more come out through ordination into curacy, there will be the cost of that curacy piece, and several Bishops are already talking to us about that.

When I look at the challenges of funding beyond 2018, I see this piece of not drawing down the capital, to which I have alluded. If we stop doing that, it is the equivalent of a 2.7% increase in apportionment. If we were to lose all our rent relief that would be 3.5%, quite before you come to any of the impacts of the increased ordination numbers and curacy.

That is not what you are talking about today. I do not want anyone to worry because we have shown this just to be transparent with you about the scale of the financial challenge. The role of the Archbishops' Council, the Finance Committee and, ultimately, me is to ensure that finance does not become the barrier to the ambition. More particularly, it is our job to have really good dialogue with all our partners inside and slightly beyond the Church such as the All Churches Trust, the Corporation of Church House and the Church Commissioners, who can work with us on funding solutions, ultimately, to enable and facilitate the finance to enable the achievement of the ambitions which underpin all of this.

Bishop David, I am very happy to invite Synod to take note of Item 21 and to move recommendations 22 to 28.

The Chair. Item 21 is now open for debate. I know several people have indicated they would want to intervene and talk a little about ordination numbers, costs, TEIs and those sorts of things. If I could encourage those who want to be talking about that to be standing in the first instance, and we will take perhaps three interventions on that subject.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of five minutes.

The Bishop of Guildford (Rt Revd Andrew Watson): So it is official - well almost: 543 gifted, passionate people have been accepted for ordained ministry in the Church of England over the past year, a 14% or so increase on the year before. Some 25% of them, that is 136 people, are young, some 5% of them, that is 27 people, are BAME, and for the first time in the Church's history the number of women being accepted for stipendiary ministry almost matches the number of men. It is not that the Church of England is dumbing down its selection processes or succumbing to some kind of vocational grade inflation. It is rather that a little more prayer is being offered to the Lord of the harvest and a little more training to the harvesters and there has been a little sharpening of the scythes and developing a culture of vocation is at last being recognised as one of the key tasks of every parish and chaplaincy rather than simply landing on the desks of hard-pressed vocations teams.

One swallow does not make a summer, of course. The only true answer to the question that I have often been asked, "Is this a blip or a trend?" is "I really don't know but I am extremely hopeful". In particular, were all the dioceses to get on board in the way that some of the dioceses have got on board, I can see absolutely no reason why we should not increase ordinand numbers by a further 10% next year on the way towards our 50% increase by 2020 and beyond.

Here there is already a problem. Many dioceses are wrestling imaginatively with the question of how they are going to fund the extra curacies we already know about, let alone those that are currently known to God alone. The finance is more complicated, as we know, than simply replacing retiring clergy with new ones, died-in-the-wool clergy with wet-behind-the-ears clergy. While a single whammy might be just about manageable, as John himself has recognised, a double whammy is not, so the talk of an 11% apportionment rise in section 20 of this afternoon's Report would be catastrophic, as has already been recognised, to the whole enterprise.

Already we know of dioceses that are, effectively, planning a cap on ordinand numbers, either through a poorly resourced vocations team or through a noble but mistaken commitment to guarantee curacies for all their local candidates. Already some DBFs are stretched to breaking point. Even in a diocese such as mine, which rightly contributes a

seven-figure sum through apportionment, the fact that Guildford is the diocese most dependent on parish share receipts - 95% dependent in fact - means that such rises in apportionment would really hold us back. This in a diocese which, praise the Lord, has, encouragingly, raised its ordinand numbers by 13 or 14 in the average year to 21 in the past year.

I fully welcome the suggestion of a dialogue with the Church Commissioners, as outlined in section 21, but I would urge that the dialogue begins today and not “when further evidence of growth is established”.

My fear is that artificially delaying the start of that conversation might well in itself stifle further growth rather than releasing it. While I recognise that the Church Commissioners are reluctant to fund more of what they see as the core business of the Church, the truth is this: a potential rise of 50% in ordinand numbers could never be described as “business as usual”.

Mr Keith Cawdron (Liverpool): I too want to refer to paragraphs 20 and 21 in particular in this Report. If you look at paragraph 20, you will see, as the Bishop has just mentioned, that there is a forward look, which I welcome, but it is suggesting that we may be looking at apportionment increases of 9.4% in 2019 and 11.1% in 2020. This is, as we know, because we believe that our prayers are going to be answered and we will have the extra ordinands whom we will need to train and support. This is obviously a serious potential issue because the Report itself says that such levels of apportionment are “unsustainable”, but it is all right because we have a cunning plan. The plan is that the Council will approach the Church Commissioners. I picked up exactly the same phrase as the Bishop where it says, “Firm evidence of growth is required before this conversation can commence”. Why? If we may realistically have to face this issue, let us start the discussions now. I have to say I do not think it will come as a complete surprise to the Church Commissioners to be asked to address this, so, yes, as the Bishop said, let it begin today.

I have another possibly slightly bigger concern. When I first became involved in the national finances of the Church some 20 years ago or more, I was struck by a strange bipolarity. If you had an item of expenditure for what we now call the Archbishops’ Council budget, it was crawled over in detail and there was anxiety over what it was going to do to the apportionment, which should not increase - all the things that are said in the paper - but if we could get it funded by the Church Commissioners, nobody paid, the money was just there. The Commissioners were producing lots of money and it was not as if markets ever went down! The Church Commissioners wanted to help, so they took on commitments and those commitments were to good things. Eventually we found they were overextended and we have had to restructure the Church’s finances very painfully, as we all know. I am anxious that we do not replay in our own day this similar type of experience, following the Commissioners’ excellent performance recently. I am concerned that it may feel too easy. If you look at the Church Commissioners’ Annual

Report and their analysis of risks, the second risk they list is that, “Responses to significant increases in support costs and other financial demands may impact on the level of distribution”, and one of their responses to this and ways of handling it is the early identification of emerging costs. Here is one, so they need to be looking at this in the context of the experience we have had before.

There are two points I want to put to Canon Spence. First, the discussion with the Commissioners should be starting now; I see no premium in delay. Secondly, we must not recreate the impression that we have a never-ending funding source, what in other places is being called a “magic money tree”, where one stroke of a pen means that the problem is solved. There will not, as far as I can see, be new money. There are hard decisions to take about priorities whatever source the money comes from and we should not pretend otherwise. Thank you.

Revd Charles Read (Norwich): I declare my interest as twofold. I have two jobs. In one job I work for a regional training course, a TEI, and in my other job I work as a diocesan officer so I can see issues of ordination training and funding from both sides of the fence. It is very good to hear all the good news about more candidates coming in for ordination training and we hope also for training for licensed lay ministry.

There is lots of good news there, as we have heard, but also some questions that are raised. Some years ago I was at a meeting of college and course staff with some folk from the Ministry Division. There was rolled out to us a proposal for allowing a total free market approach to where students went to do their ordination training. Many of us in the room in both the colleges and courses sectors were nervous about this and thought this was not a good idea. Being somebody who does not know the meaning of the phrase “tact and sensitivity”, I said to the Ministry Division official who had told us about this, “Can you please tell me what is the theological rationale for a free market economics approach to what you have just outlined?” The Ministry Division staff member said, “We don’t do theology in the Ministry Division”. I am glad you laughed because that is probably the appropriate response. That member of staff is no longer working for the NCIs and when we have meetings of Ministry Division now we always have theological input, for which we must thank Eeva John, who pioneered the Common Awards Process, and Ian McIntosh, who is currently the Head of Formation, who has provided very good theological input.

My question stands: what is the theological underpinning of the way we handle our money in the way that it is disbursed? If you talk to people who run TEIs, whether colleges or courses, they will all tell you that none of them feels financially secure and stable, and that cannot be good for the life of our Church. It adds stress to all of us who work in that sector, particularly to principals and to chairs of college and course councils.

I want to highlight one particular issue where this is a problem. If you are an ordination candidate going to train full time in a residential college, you normally get a choice of

where to go to train. With one or two exceptions, that is still normally true. If you are a candidate training on a regional course, and nowadays that might also be full time and certainly not non-residential, you will often not get a choice of where you go and train, but sometimes you will, and that is the problem, because some dioceses give their candidates in that position a choice of which part-residential course to train on and some do not. That means that some part-residential courses get a bigger pool to recruit students from and therefore more fee income, and some do not.

The analogy I thought of a minute ago was like this. If I am running a shop that sells ice cream sundaes - that would be my dream retirement job, except I would probably eat most of the stock - and next door to me is my friend who also runs a shop selling ice cream sundaes, we both sell excellent and delicious ice cream sundaes, but I am only allowed to sell my ice cream sundaes to houses on the south side of the street whereas my neighbour and friend is allowed to sell her ice cream sundaes on both sides of the street, that is how it is with some of our regional courses.

If I could do John Spence's work for him, if I were John Spence I would be replying to myself and saying, "That's an interesting question, Mr Read, but it is not really within the remit of the Archbishops' Council budget", and that would be fair comment.

I do think somebody somewhere needs to be looking at how we stabilise our TEIs financially in a way that is responsible and robust. I am not saying that we should not ask hard questions of institutions that are not doing their job, but there is a real issue of financial instability amongst our TEIs and even with growing numbers of students I think that will continue. Somebody somewhere needs to look at this to see whether anything can be done and whether it can be done in a prompt manner. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. I am going to invite Canon Spence to respond to those items. He has up to three minutes and no mentions of ice cream!

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): What is the point of being here? Charles, I entirely agree with you, I am not going to answer. I fully understand. I have had meetings within the TEI principals. I have tried to help them be reassured, but it really is not an issue for the Archbishops' Council budget in terms of what are individual diocesan policies for choice or allocation of places at colleges; that is for the dioceses. I continue to hope that the TEIs will think how they can help each other in the aims of financial stability.

I then come back to Bishop Andrew and to Keith and their very legitimate concerns. Let me say again, we showed this forward look to show what it would be like if we were successful with the ongoing trend on ordinands without solving the budgetary piece. The last thing I would ever want to do is to hear about caps on ordinands.

The dialogue has indeed started. There is always a time lag between when these papers have to be printed and where we are today. If you looked at the last slide when I was

giving my address, I said formal application will be made. So we have moved beyond the question of whether we need further evidence; no, we have to assume the trend continues, and we will be making formal application into the Church Commissioners later in this calendar year. That requires an immense amount of work.

After you agree this budget today I start work on the budget for 2019. We will want to understand from dioceses exactly what their financial challenges are. We know some are facing real challenges following the withdrawal of Darlow even though they have had transitional funding. We need to understand where those issues are greatest, which ones we can address ourselves and what we can legitimately talk to the Church Commissioners about.

If I take Keith's point about the Church Commissioners' funds, absolutely there is no magic money tree. I did the conversations with them before the previous money was found to enable the transitional funding post-Darlow and I can say I had five hours of legitimate interrogation by the Church Commissioners (I do not think that is too strong a word). I know that they will only accept a further application from the Archbishops' Council if they are convinced firstly that it is a test that will stand the test of time, that it is now covering all the pieces, and secondly that it has a logic and basis that says that we have the strategic growth now firmly in plan and we will not fail in what we are doing, and thirdly that we recognise they are not going to go back into an era of uncontrolled over distribution. They take their responsibilities very seriously and I respect that. The dialogue is well underway. We are commissioning the work. I met with the Chair of the Ministry Council at lunchtime around the investigations that we need to do and I look forward to having a full discussion at Archbishops' Council in September and with the Church Commissioners in November.

The Chair: Thank you. Now for more general debate.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Revd Canon Giles Goddard (Southwark): Three years ago, the Synod voted overwhelmingly for an environment motion which, among other things, set up something called the Environment Working Group reporting to the Archbishops' Council as part of our Fifth Mark of Mission. That Group has now been set up. It is chaired by the Bishop of Salisbury. It has done some excellent work and I think a report is on its way to Archbishops' Council about the work that we have been doing.

As members will know, the environment is becoming more and more important in our priorities, which is why it is part of the Fifth Mark of Mission. The Archbishop of Canterbury recently became the President of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network in recognition of that.

I am really concerned about two things really. One is that in GS 2076, paragraph 53, which is the paragraph talking about the priorities of Mission and Public Affairs, does not mention the environment. Secondly, paragraph 55, which is the paragraph talking about the priorities of the Church Buildings Council, also only mentions the environment tangentially. Those are the two departments in which our environmental staff sit, so it feels as though we are not being very joined-up as a Church. Synod has voted for this to be a priority but it does not seem to be a priority in Church House.

In that context, we have real concern about the Archbishops' Environmental Adviser, who is currently a part-time post on three days a week and we have been advised that there is a likelihood that his post will be cut to two days a week from 2018 in order to meet the extra costs. We think this would be detrimental. We are also not sure about the Cathedrals and Church Buildings post, that that will continue at the same level.

We really need to prioritise this work. We are hoping to have a whole day at Synod next July talking about this and we really do need, as a Church, to ensure that the environment is sufficiently significant and properly funded. Can I have your assurance that those posts will not be cut and also that the priorities will be reinvigorated? Thank you.

Canon Phillip Blinkhorn (Manchester): I want to ask a question about safeguarding. The expenditure is increasing the budget. For 2017, it was £1.38 million and the forecast is a £1.5 million spend. It is up to £1.6 million for next year and I am sure as we get to 2019 and 2020 we will see if not similar increases, certainly increases. I am pretty sure that this is mirrored by most dioceses. I am the Chair of the Board of Finance in Manchester and the amount of time and effort and money that is being spent on safeguarding rises every year. It does concern me. I think it is an area where the Church would benefit from not allowing quite as much discretion to dioceses as there is at the moment in terms of staffing and expenditure. I think it is an area where the NCIs could usefully look at a national service which would give us the ability to staff correctly and also to make sure that we have some uniformity of practice. I do trust that this is something that could be looked at for perhaps 2019 and 2020. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Dr Richmond and then I will invite Canon Spence to respond again.

Revd Dr Patrick Richmond: I am so grateful for all that Canon Spence and the team are doing and for his robust and forward-looking approach. Some will probably not be surprised to hear that the Prophet Jeremiah is dear to me. I want to ask and sharpen the questions that have been raised already in regard to the challenges facing dioceses already as well as coming down the pike.

Last year, Canon Spence, in response to a question I asked, assured that there would be help for dioceses that were facing significant financial challenges. I understand that there were several of them during the year and I am glad to hear from some in those dioceses

that things are looking better. As there are already challenges, I wondered what sort of help was given and did it have any budgetary implications? As we look forward, I am very conscious that in some dioceses the budget that is set hopes to appoint a number of clergy but that number is not reached and so a deficit budget can be transformed into a surplus budget in some dioceses simply because there are unplanned vacancies that are not filled.

I am so pleased at the progress that is being made in recruiting ordinands at the rate which is aimed at and is our objective, but even if that is successful, because of the retirements coming, the number of clergy available is going down. Anecdotally, I think dioceses are already finding that it is harder to place clergy, at least in certain parishes, and that may well be because the number of clergy willing to move is going down. That obviously has massive implications. It must have financial implications, but they may not all be negative though.

I wonder whether Canon Spence can give us some guidance on what is likely to happen. Is it the case that as the number of clergy available in total goes down, dioceses will not be having to pay so many stipends and will be able to release housing and reorganise their liquid assets in exchange for their fixed assets, in which case the financial implications in the future may be more positive, or is it the case that there are other hidden costs? Some further guidance about the future and the present challenges to diocesan finance would be most welcome. Thank you.

The Chair: Canon Spence to respond again. Three minutes, John.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): I will do my best. You are a slave driver! Giles, your point on the environment, if you look at my question 79, which we did not get to on Friday night, I explained that the Environmental Adviser is employed on a consultancy basis. It is true that we are likely to have to reduce the hours a bit, but in so doing we have taken into account the considerable other areas of focus on the environment that exist elsewhere. We cannot list every objective on every page, but if you look at the objectives for 2020 there is a reference to the environment, so I assure you that neither the Archbishops' Council nor the staff of Church House have neglected that piece.

On Phillip's piece on safeguarding, we must never let ourselves think that more spending equals better spending. There has been a significant growth in the amount of spending we have had to undertake. The department has seen a huge spread in their responsibilities, the variety of things with which they are having to deal, the number of public inquiries and so on. It is coming to be a logical time, I think, where it will be good for us to take stock of how the regime is working now and how it can be improved. This is not for me, it is for the National Safeguarding Panel, but I am sure they will be thinking hard how we can get the best balance between maintaining diocesan responsibility and accountability, giving central support and facilitation and, similarly, achieving in a cost-effective way a consistent standard across the Church.

Patrick, yes, we did provide the transitional funding to dioceses through Darlow, £17 million this year and £15 million next. We have also given support and strategic capacity funding. We are very, very keen to work with dioceses to help them build the strategies. In terms of your specific point, what is becoming clear is that while we are responding to the collection of dioceses saying they wanted to restore the number of priests to the number of about 2010 while at the same time unlocking the qualities and talents of the laypeople, the modelling is not as simple. That is one of the pieces of work that is going to be happening over the next three months in advance of any approach to the Church Commissioners. We will be coming into numerous dioceses to try to model exactly how that looks in order that we can understand the hump in the financial requirement.

The Chair: I will take just a couple of speeches of two minutes then I might be interested in Canon Spence responding and then a motion for closure.

The Chair imposed a speech limit of two minutes.

Mrs Angela Scott (Rochester): A very simple question: is there any money specifically set aside for the training of licensed lay ministry or is Vote 1 entirely channelled into the training for ordained ministry?

The Chair: Mr Hind, after which my learned friend tells me I would need to seek a motion for closure before Canon Spence responds.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath & Wells): You will be pleased to know that I am not going to ask for a theology of why we have Votes 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, but the historicity of it is probably lost in the mists of time. A couple of years ago we got a hint that Votes 3 and 4 were going to be merged, but now if you look at the presentation that we have before us it appears that Votes 2, 3 and 4 have all been merged together in the way in which things are being presented. I just wonder whether it is time for us to begin to present this a little bit better and to have quite clearly training, central costs and other and the CHARM offensive as three separate votes rather than wasting time on five separate votes.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order.

The Chair: I had seen Canon Elizabeth Paver standing as the Vice-Chair of the House of Laity, so I will take her and then, Mr Freeman, I would be very grateful.

Canon Elizabeth Paver (Sheffield): Canon Spence, as you might imagine, it is on education. As we all know, the current Government has already said there is going to be a grave cut in the schools budget across the country and that is going to affect our Church schools radically. I wondered if the Archbishops' Council could consider working with the National Society in order to do some sort of audit of what is actually happening in our Church schools because if we want to have them at the forefront of our mission and vision

for the children then they are all suffering greatly from this worry that they are not going to be able to maintain the quality of staff and, therefore, the quality of education. Thank you.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): Point of order: motion for closure on Item 21.

The Chair: That has my agreement.

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

The Chair: That is clearly carried. Canon Spence, three minutes to respond to those last few comments.

Canon Dr John Spence (ex officio): Angela, no, there is no money specifically for lay ministry training because that at the moment is a diocesan responsibility. It remains to be seen how we take nationally forward the lay ministry work stream.

Tim, thank you very much for reminding me that the staff wanted to do exactly what you said and I resisted it. Thank you very much, that was helpful. I actually take the view if you are going to combine them you should keep Vote 2 separate because that is the operating expenses bit whereas Votes 3 and 4 are about mission and ecumenism.

Liz, I am sure we would be very happy to work with the Education Council in thinking through this problem. Personally, I would love to see a greater visibility of education both in the Archbishops' Council discussions and in Strategic Development Funding applications. The Chair here can take a little tick, because I know we are about to get one from Manchester that features education, but we have had a paucity of strategy applications linked to schools and education.

If I could respond to the debate, Chair, can I just thank you all very much. If we are going to be in the world of ice cream, you have given me an absolute tutti frutti with all sorts of varieties not currently thought of. I think probably the chocolate to make a 99 was that ongoing theme of where do we go next. I have a very clear understanding of what you expect of me and, as I say, I start work on the budget. I said tomorrow but it will probably be tonight because when Yvonne is driving me home I will start dictating notes to this lot, which they will be really pleased about.

It does give me the chance to say my personal thank you to William Nye, to Ian and the wonderful David White, who are so patient with me. I am not a demanding person, as you can imagine, and I am absolutely super to work with, but they are hugely patient, respond to all my requests, get very tired when I am on the phone all the time, but they work for you, for that risen Christ every day, and I am hugely grateful. Thank you.

The Chair: I now put Item 21 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Synod do take note of this Report’

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is very clearly carried.

ITEM 22

The Chair: That now brings us to Item 22. John, you have already moved en bloc, have you not? Item 22 is open for debate. I see no one standing. I therefore put Item 22 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s expenditure for the year 2018, as shown in its budget, of £15,246,952 in respect of Training for Ministry’

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is clearly carried.

ITEM 23

The Chair: We move on to Item 23. This is open for debate. I see no one standing. I therefore put Item 23 to the vote.

The motion

‘That the Synod approve the Archbishops’ Council’s expenditure for the year 2018, as should in its budget, of £17,562,244 in respect of the National Church Responsibilities’

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: Thank you.

ITEM 24

The Chair: Item 24 is now open for debate. It is like a Post Office queue, is it not? I can hear I am developing that tone of voice as I do it. I see no one standing. I therefore put Item 24 to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2018, as shown in its budget, of £1,244,024 in respect of Grants and provisions'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That too is clearly carried.

ITEM 25

The Chair: Item 25 is now open for debate. I see no one standing. I therefore put Item 25 to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2018, as shown in its budget, of £806,167 in respect of Mission Agency clergy pension contributions.

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That is clearly carried.

ITEM 26

The Chair: Item 26 is open for debate. I see no one standing. I therefore put Item 26 to the vote.

The motion

'That the Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's expenditure for the year 2018, as shown in its budget, of £4,805,985 in respect of the CHARM Scheme'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That too is clearly carried.

ITEM 27

The Chair: Item 27 is now open for debate. I see no one standing. I therefore put Item 27 to the vote.

The motion

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's proposals (set out in the Table of Apportionment contained in GS 2076) for the apportionment amongst the dioceses of the net sum to be provided by them to enable the Council to meet the expected expenditure shown in its budget for the year 2018.'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That too is clearly carried.

ITEM 28

The Chair: Finally on this slew of items, Item 28 is now open for debate. Once more I see no one standing. I therefore put Item 28 to the vote.

The motion

'That this Synod approve the Archbishops' Council's proposals (set out in the Table of Apportionment contained in GS 2076) for the pooling adjustment for 2018 in respect of additional maintenance grants for ordinands.'

was put and carried on a show of hands.

The Chair: That too is clearly carried. Thank you, Synod, for a good-natured debate and some swift voting at the end there. Thank you to Canon Spence for his introduction and summing up of the debate.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Point of order.

The Chair: Point of order, Archbishop.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Out of order but I am going to do it anyway. I actually think that we just need to give thanks to the Lord for John Spence. How he masters the detail when actually he has no sight, how he does it can only be a work of grace. He is an example for all of us that whatever disabilities we may have, the grace of God is still capable of working through us. I just wanted us to thank the Lord for you and the gift he has given to you. You actually help us to understand things which would have been very difficult, so in the name of Our Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we bless him, we thank him and rejoice, John, that you are such a wonderful faithful steward. Can we please thank him formally.

THE CHAIR *Dr Rachel Jepson (Birmingham)* took the Chair at 3.53 pm

ITEM 29 FAREWELLS

The Chair: Fellow members of Synod, we now come to Item 29 on our agenda, Farewells. Therefore, I invite the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, to present the farewells, firstly to the Bishop of Bristol, Mike Hill, and then to the Bishop at Lambeth, Nigel Stock.

The Archbishop of Canterbury (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr Justin Welby): Thank you, Chair. I start with Mike Hill. To say farewell to Mike is one of those days at Synod when we say goodbye to a Bishop who has been a source of refreshing energy not only for his diocese but also the wider Church and also with extraordinary humility and, very quietly below the radar, an immense impact in parts of the Anglican Communion, for which we are hugely, hugely grateful.

Mike hails from Manchester, born he says - these are his words - of “entrepreneurial parents”. This certainly rubbed off as we will see. Over the years we have looked to him to be at the front of those aspects of Church life which reach out beyond the usual suspects.

Sorry, I have just remembered something. I must take my shoes off after the comments this morning. I do not want to offend you any further. They are my Friday socks but I did genuinely put them on this morning for the first time since they were last washed.

Can we get back to Mike Hill? Mike comes with that sharpness and imagination that comes from someone who discovered faith in Christ as an adult, that sense of coming into something so precious that he has a particular gift in communicating his love for Jesus Christ in the Church.

He began work in the printing industry. After a course in business studies his entrepreneurial gifts were apparent and they remain so to this day. He has shown far more than that. He discovered Christ at the age of 18 and he was then encouraged to try and discover more about his vocation and went to join the Scargill Community for a year to see if that might include ordained ministry. Not only did he have that calling affirmed in that year but he also met a nurse called Anthea, who had been living in Africa.

Anthea and Mike married in 1973 and have been an extraordinary blessing. One of the things fed back from people is what a gift they have both been as a couple and with their whole family. Anthea has had a very significant career as a nurse in palliative care at the same time as a close and vital partnership with Mike.

Mike’s particular gift in many ways has been of that of an evangelist drawing people to faith in Christ. He did his curacy in Addiscombe and then went to the Upton Leigh estate in Slough where the church grew from single figures to over 100 in three years. Then came the move to Chesham Bois, Amersham. During his time at St Leonard’s, Mike was

inspired by the Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago. St Leonard's grew significantly to several hundred strong and Mike became the first President of the Willow Creek Association, what you might call a sort of muscular Christian approach. He continued not to play only in one sports area but integrated imaginative and effective approaches to faith into the Church.

At the same time he has had that great gift which has made him such an effective Bishop of building relationships with fellow clergy, shown as he became Area Dean of Amersham in 1989 and then moved to what is often caricatured unfairly and unjustly as the most establishment of appointments, an archdeacon. In that, he demonstrated, as so many do, that the role of archdeacon is crucial in clergy welfare and in nurturing Church life. He moved on to become Bishop of Buckingham, and those different posts demonstrate his standing in the Diocese of Oxford.

For the past 15 years he has been the Bishop of Bristol. He has recently done a Bishop's Visitation of the diocese and it has been an opportunity for people to acknowledge what he has brought to them as a Bishop. So often what they emphasised was his teaching ministry. To quote a few - and I do not have their permission - "I have on so many occasions been inspired and challenged by Bishop Mike's talks, addresses, sermons and chats. I've learnt so much from the lectures and gone home feeling twice the person I was in the morning". Another one: "Many of us here will have shared your spoken word and deed which has inspired and uplifted us then to go on and demonstrate our faith and commitment effectively in the parishes". Another one: "You have shown by example how we engage with the realities of this world while keeping our eyes firmly fixed on the Lord. Our diocesan links with Uganda are one example of this".

Indeed, the wider Church has reason to give thanks for Mike's ability to win trust in many places, not least in Uganda. He has been a constant visitor, helping mutual understanding, explaining what we are doing and what they are doing. I want to express my personal thanks for work which without him would have been very, very much more complicated.

Mike has wide interests which help him connect with many people. He plays the guitar, appreciates music, follows all kinds of sports. He also is apparently interested in Manchester United. I am not going to say anything more about that.

The other thing about him is his resilience and I think that is something that we all appreciate. Members of Synod will remember a very severe car accident in which both Mike and Anthea suffered injuries; Anthea more so than Mike. It says so much about both of them that they came through that grim time with both courage and faith and without complaining or stepping away from what they were called to do more than was absolutely necessary.

As a respected Member of the House of Lords, Mike has contributed much over the years as a Church voice in that Chamber and, which is not so widely known, much more as a pastoral voice to many of the other Members of the House and of the House of Commons, staff and Members, through friendship and pastoral care. He is going to be hugely missed in that forum by his Bishop contemporaries, in the Synod, in his international contributions and of course in the Diocese of Bristol.

I am sure, on behalf of all of us, Mike, we wish you and Anthea and your family every joy in your retirement. I know the one thing from which you will not retire is inspiring people with your love of Jesus Christ and bringing hope and joy to many. Mike, thank you very, very much indeed.

I now come to one of the most difficult tasks of this Synod - of any Synod that I have been part of, which is admittedly not many compared to many of you - and that is a farewell to Bishop Nigel Stock, formerly Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich from October 2007 to October 2013 and then Bishop at Lambeth from October 2013 to August 2017, or 31 July 2017, I think, to be precise.

It is a difficult task because, despite working with him intimately over the last three years, despite extensive research done by myself and the often imagined but absolutely real secret intelligence unit based at Lambeth, known as Q, we are unable to find anything scandalous or in fact anything other than admirable. What can one say? It is deeply depressing at the end of a Synod where the aim of this speech was initially to produce scandal and suppress admiration.

In brief, Nigel was at university in Durham and then went on for ordination training at Ripon College, Cuddesdon. He was ordained deacon in 1976, priest in 1977 and Bishop in 2000. His curacy was served at St Peter's Stockton-on-Tees, in an area of considerable economic stress - it still is - during the late 1970s, at a time when pressures on the coal industry and on almost all of the local economy were intense.

From 1979 to 1984 he was priest-in-charge of St Peter's in Taraka in the diocese of Aipo Rongo, Papua New Guinea. Did I get that more or less right? Something like that! Which included chaplaincy work at the University of Technology and also to the PNG Defence Force. The PNG Defence Force are the two --- This was of course excellent preparation to be Bishop to the Forces.

I have, having spent many hours travelling with Nigel, picked up endless - a few - stories from PNG. Inevitably there was a great deal of illness. He never mentions that. But he also had at the same time the immense sense of humour which has made him one of the most attractive, intelligent and enjoyable working companions that one could imagine. I am sorry, I am giving a cause for admiration. I will try to restrain myself.

One particular account, which if you can catch him before he goes I warmly recommend, was of the occasion when the neighbour's car, a relatively new van, was stolen by an armed group. I cannot tell the whole story, and certainly not in his style, although it is worth hearing, but it goes on for a while. It consists of the van and a pursuing police car - the only police car in the area - going round and round the only tarmac road in the area where they were living, passing them occasionally, with much gunfire and sirens until it ran off the road, the thieves escaped and the police riddled it with bullets before returning it to its hapless owner. Nigel and Carolyne both found this story hysterically funny, although it would be seen as somewhat dramatic in many parts of the United Kingdom.

He returned to become vicar of St Mark's Shiremoor in Newcastle Diocese in 1985, and then team rector of North Shields, St Augustine and Christchurch, and Rural Dean from 1991 to 1998. From 1998 to 2000 he was a residentiary canon at Durham Cathedral and the Bishop of Stockport until 2007, following which he took over as Bishop of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich. From 2013 until now he has been Bishop at Lambeth, as well as for the last three years Bishop to the Forces and obviously Bishop to the Falkland Islands. I will return to those later.

We have tried every source for his work in the North East of England and found only disappointing accounts of upright, dedicated, hard-working and effective ministry in areas of deprivation. John Inge, who has failed us almost completely, despite being a close working companion, says: "No tales of debauchery, I'm afraid. Nigel is far too upright". Well, you would know the difference, John. The most memorable achievement, according to John Inge, was when the Stocks were able to perform the feat of getting a whole banana intact into a milk bottle. Milk bottles have gone out of style, but, Nigel, perhaps you can perform the trick later. I have here a bottle and a banana!

The affection in which he was held in St Edmundsbury & Ipswich is measured by the amount of vituperative correspondence I received when I approached him to become Bishop at Lambeth. I remarked then that I needed someone with diocesan bishop experience, of a different churchmanship to myself and able to provide a focus of stability and calm in the obviously totally calm atmosphere at Lambeth Palace. He quickly picked up that he was the main target of these observations. He tried everything to avoid the job, including going to Australia and breaking his leg, but we held on and here he has been.

To say that he is liked and will, with Carolyne above all, be profoundly missed at Lambeth is an understatement. He is genuinely and universally held in respect and profound affection, as is Carolyne, and the experience of working with them has been wonderful and instructive. He seldom shows any sign of being afraid or bad-tempered and manages to sustain a sense of humour in circumstances which most people would consider to be impossible.

His work as Bishop to the Forces has also been excellent and I am sure you would find the Forces Synod and members of the Forces here would say the same. He has worked extremely closely with the three senior chaplains and has been effective in developing vocations as well as in carrying out normal episcopal ministry.

Normal episcopal ministry to the Forces, of course, is not normal by most standards. Among memorable moments has been boarding a ship at sea off the Falkland Islands from a smaller boat and driving a Challenger 2 tank on Salisbury Plain. That was one of my happier moments with Nigel as I was driving another one. Yes, I know you are all thinking boys with the toys, but there we are. I happened to be upwind of both Nigel and my wife, who was in an armoured vehicle as well, when the command sergeant major suggested that he was able to produce a very thick smokescreen simply by shouting to the driver, "Smoke right". I was tempted and I fell. Nigel disappeared into a thick cloud of particulates, and we remained upwind for the rest of the exercise. Tim, it is a rough life working at Lambeth!

The Reverend Kathy Biles at Christchurch Cathedral in the Falkland Islands says she remembers the day in January 2016 that they went out with the military, courtesy of Commander British Forces. They were collected in a Sea King helicopter from North Arm in East Falkland and taken to Port Howard in West Falkland. She says that when they clipped the safety line on Nigel and let him kneel to look out of the open side of the helicopter, all they could see was a purple shirt, a flying helmet and an ear-to-ear grin. He and Carolyne then transferred to a Royal Navy inflatable and, escorted by dolphins, they went to HMS Clyde to sail back to Stanley. It is really not a normal job! More seriously, she comments: "As Bishop to the Falkland Islands, he has been brilliant". Three trips there, I think it is, is it not, Nigel? Three? "Not only encouraging and helpful but ready to cope with and enjoy anything we throw at him. And Carolyne, too, has been wonderful".

Another former member of staff at Lambeth comments: "He's a machine nut, getting into the seat of big vehicles like tanks whenever he can, but he couldn't cope with the coffee machine at Lambeth!"

The comments of the Chaplain-in-Chief of the Royal Air Force, Jonathan Chaffey, who is sitting just back there, reminded me of an experience when we went jointly on the simulator at RAF Brize Norton on a visit to the RAF. Nigel crashed a jet on the simulator, I crashed it a little further on and my wife then played her part. The instructor was asked which of Caroline Welby, myself and Nigel might prove the best pilot, and he replied, "I couldn't possibly comment, but she shows considerable potential". Nigel and I were duly discomfited.

Our colleagues at Church House say that Nigel's gift is to return things to proportion with a humorous remark. He can also use different languages, celebrating the Eucharist one day at Lambeth with the Community of St Anselm in pidgin. The confession began

memorably with “Me sorry me bugger up”, which was repeated faithfully by the Community of St Anselm, for most of whom English was a second or third language and some of whom had to have it explained to them later.

There is much more that could be said, but I shall end with another member of the Church House staff who is a former colleague of Nigel’s. He described Nigel, quoting Horace, as “integer vitae scelerisque purus” - I will not translate it, mainly because I cannot and I forgot to put the translation down in my notes - making the point that he is not the sort of person who leaves a trail of scurrilous anecdotes. Nigel is someone profoundly rounded, thoroughly enjoying his family in every way and adored by his grandchildren who in his turn he adores.

He and Carolyne will be retiring to the Diocese of Bath & Wells to add to the innumerable bishops living in that region (a compliment in some ways to Peter Price and Peter Hancock). Their hospitality will not diminish. Their skill of putting people at their ease and leading them faithfully to the presence of Christ, whose invitation they so easily convey with such delight and joy in their own faith, is something that will be missed greatly.

Nigel, we are profoundly thankful for your ministry and for all that we have gained from you.

The Chair: Synod, as we are finishing early, it may be helpful if I let you know that dinner, or tea if you prefer, will be served for those who have booked in for it from 6.00 pm tonight in the Roger Kirk restaurant only. That completes the business for this group of sessions and I call upon the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu, to prorogue us. Thank you.

The Archbishop of York (Most Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu): Synod, before prorogation, the Ven. Alan Wolstencroft is standing down as Synodical Secretary of the Convocation of York, having served in this capacity from 2007, after a distinguished period of ministry in the Diocese of Manchester. He was Archdeacon of Manchester from 1998 to 2004. He had to go early. May I invite the Prolocutor to receive this? Make sure you deliver it. Do not drink it on the way to Manchester. Express our gratitude and thanks.

PROROGATION

The Archbishop of York prorogued the Synod.

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