

Friday 14 February 2025
9.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

ORDER PAPER VIII

OPENING WORSHIP

PRESENTATION OF PETITION

The Revd Mae Christie (Southwark) has given notice of her desire to present a petition in accordance with Standing Order 43.

SPECIAL AGENDA I:

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

Mission and Pastoral Measure (GS 2394)

First Consideration

The Ven Fiona Gibson (Hereford) to move:

- 503** 'That the Measure entitled "Mission and Pastoral Measure" be considered for revision in committee.'

Mission and Pastoral Regulations (GS 2395)

First Consideration

The Ven Fiona Gibson (Hereford) to move:

- 504** 'That the Regulations entitled "Mission and Pastoral Regulations" be considered for revision in committee.'

SPECIAL AGENDA IV:

DIOCESAN SYNOD MOTION

REDISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS (GS 2395A AND GS 2395B)

The Bishop of Bath and Wells to move:

21 'That this Synod

- a) call upon the Church Commissioners and Archbishops' Council to undertake everything necessary to effect a redistribution of financial resources directly to Diocesan Stipend Funds to reflect the value of contributions made by Diocesan Boards of Finance to the Church of England Funded Pension Scheme since it was established by the settlement of 1997 (£2.6 billion)
- b) call upon Diocesan Boards of Finance to manage the funds redistributed as a result of the above to support parish ministry in the ways discerned locally to be most effective in enabling growth and sustaining the Church of England's commitment to be a Christian presence in every community.'

Mr Robert McNeil-Wilson (Gloucester) to move as an amendment:

49 '*Leave out* everything after "That this Synod" and *insert*:

- a) reaffirm its commitment to conserve the underlying value of the Church Commissioners assets in order to support future generations of the Church and thank the Church Commissioners for their ethical stewardship of assets in supporting the ongoing mission and ministry of the Church of England;
- b) endorse and affirm the Commissioners' disbursement to the Church of £1.2 billion during this triennium and their intention of maintaining similar disbursement during the next two triennia;

- c) recognise the catastrophic and rapidly deteriorating picture for diocesan finances outlined in GS2396A and the highly detrimental impact that this is having on the life and viability of the parishes and dioceses of our whole Church;
- d) call upon the present and future Triennium Funding Groups, or their equivalent, to prioritise within their proposals to be brought to Synod the provision that at least one quarter of the sum (currently £400 million p.a.) disbursed to the Church during this and future funding cycles be paid directly into the stipend funds of the dioceses as a means of best supporting the charitable objects of the Church Commissioners to promote the mission and ministry of the Church of England;
- e) call upon the House of Bishops to lead on the agreement of a formula for the distribution of such funds that will reflect
 - i. the amounts that individual dioceses have paid in pension costs since 1997; and
 - ii. a balancing moderation that takes into account the comparative wealth of dioceses.
- f) request the House of Bishops, in consultation with Diocesan Secretaries and the Archbishops' Council, to devise means of accountability through regional peer support, planning and scrutiny to ensure that funds will be used to enable growth in parish ministry and church flourishing."

Item 50 to be moved only if item 49 is not carried

Canon Mark Sheard (Archbishops' Council) to move:

50 *'Leave out* everything after "That this Synod" and *insert:*

- a) thank the Church Commissioners for their ethical stewardship of the assets which they are responsible for managing on behalf of the Church and encourage them to maximise the sustainable value of distributions to the

Church today whilst ensuring that the value of ongoing distributions is maintained to support future generations;

- b) welcome the Church Commissioners' planned disbursement to the Church of £1.2 billion during the 2023-25 triennium to support the ongoing mission and ministry of the Church of England and their intention of maintaining similar disbursement during the next two triennia;
- c) recognise the catastrophic and rapidly deteriorating picture for diocesan finances outlined in GS2396A and the highly detrimental impact that this is having on the life and viability of the parishes and dioceses of our whole Church;
- d) welcome the Triennium Funding Working Group's work on spending priorities and the engagement opportunities that have been offered in recent months to a range of stakeholders, including to General Synod members and encourage such engagement as the norm for the development of spending plans in the future;
- e) call upon the Archbishops' Council, Church Commissioners and House of Bishops to prioritise within the 2026-2028 spending plans the proposals from the Diocesan Finances Review outlined in GS 2380, which aim to ease dioceses' current financial stress in a way which helps to revitalise parishes, develop the Church's long-term missional and financial health and increase clergy stipends and the starting level of clergy pensions; and
- f) in light of their responsibilities as charity trustees, call upon the Archbishops' Council and Church Commissioners, in consultation with the House of Bishops and Diocesan Secretaries, to consider how accountability for grant funding can be best achieved in order to provide effective mutual learning in enabling growth in parish ministry and church flourishing.