

Synod Summary for Diocesan Secretaries

Introduction

This summary is prepared for Diocesan Secretaries and their offices. Please do share with others as you wish.

The General Synod met from 13th to 15th November at Church House. This summary provides an update for Diocesan Secretaries. The full [business done](#) can be found on our [website](#). The report of proceedings will be made available in due course.

Synod Business

Item 1: [Welcomes and Introductions](#): the usual start of the group of sessions. All members were welcomed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In addition, there was the formal introduction of newly elected members. There had been sixteen new members since the July 2023 group of sessions, and there are seven Bishops attending the Synod during a vacancy in See.

Item 2: [Joint Presidential Address](#): the Archbishop of Canterbury and Archbishop of York gave a joint Presidential Address. This referenced the conflict in Israel and Gaza, and included an address from the Archbishop in Jerusalem.

Item 3: [GS 2323 Report of the Business Committee](#): The Chair of the Business Committee, Canon Robert Hammond, spoke to the Business Committee Report and answered questions from members about the shape of the Agenda. The Synod voted to take note of this on a show of hands.

Presentation of Petitions: two petitions were presented by Mr Sam Margrave (Coventry). They stand referred to the Business Committee.

Item 4: [Questions](#): There were 226 submitted to this group of sessions. In this session, questions 1 to 103 to the House of Bishops related to Living in Love and Faith, and the Crown Nominations Commission were answered.

Item 5: [GS 2324 Appointment of Chair of the Pensions Board](#): Synod agreed to the reappointment of Mr Clive Mather as Chair of the Pensions Board on a show of hands.

Item 500: [GS 2325 Abuse \(Redress\) Measure](#): This Measure will introduce a consistent approach to redress following abuse and was presented for First Consideration. It was approved for consideration in Revision Committee following a vote of the Synod. The results were as follows:

- In favour: 309
- Against: 21

There were 13 abstentions recorded

Members are invited to send submissions to the Revision Committee (revisioncommittee@churchofengland.org) by 5.30pm on Tuesday 19th December.

Item 6: [Questions](#): In this session, questions 104 to 156 to the Church Commissioners, Pensions Board, Ethical Investment Advisory Board, Faith and Order Commission, Liturgical Commission, National Society Council, Council for Christian Unity and the Archbishops' Council were answered.

Item 501: [GS 2326 Payment to the Churches Conservation Trust Order 2023](#): This set the level of Church funding for the Churches Conservation Trust for the period 2024 to 2027 and was approved on a show of hands.

Items 9 to 27: [GS 2327 62nd Report of the Standing Orders Committee](#): This put forward a number of proposals to amend the Standing Orders and the changes were approved on a show of hands. The updated Standing Orders can be found on the [website](#).

Item 7: [GS 2328 Living in Love and Faith](#): This was the substantive item for consideration by Synod. There were fourteen amendments and two were carried by Synod. The final motion was as follows:

‘That this Synod, conscious that the Church is not of one mind on the issues raised by Living in Love and Faith, that we are in a period of uncertainty, and that many in the Church on all sides are being deeply hurt at this time, recognise the progress made by the House of Bishops towards implementing the motion on Living in Love and Faith passed by this Synod in February 2023, as reported in GS 2328, encourage the House to continue its work of implementation, and ask the House to consider whether some standalone services for same-sex couples could be made available for use, possibly on a trial basis, on the timescale envisaged by the motion passed by the Synod in February 2023.’

It was approved in all three Houses as required. The results were as follows:

	In favour	Against
House of Bishops	23	10
House of Clergy	100	93
House of Laity	104	100

There were 4 abstentions in the House of Bishops and 1 in the House of Clergy

Item 502: [GS 2329 Vacancy in See Committee \(Amendment\) Regulation](#): This updates the Vacancy in See Committee membership for the Diocese of Salisbury so that the Deans of Jersey and Guernsey are included as ex officio members of Salisbury's ViSC. It was approved on a show of hands.

February Group of Sessions 2024

The February group of sessions will take place from Friday 23 February to Tuesday 27 February. We are aware of the challenge of accommodation costs in London. The expenses policy has been reviewed and the rate has increased to £155 per night. The latest expenses policy can be found [here](#). We have advised members that if they are unable to find accommodation within this range, they need to contact their diocesan office before booking anything.