

Full Synod: First Day

Friday 6 July 2007

THE CHAIR *The Archbishop of York (Dr John Sentamu)* took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

The Chairman led the Synod in prayer, mentioning especially Miss Anne Ashton, a member from Portsmouth, who had died since February, a former member Revd Dr Carole Cull, General Synod elections scrutineer, who had died, Canon Paul Mellor, undergoing treatment for cancer, and the Bishop of Portsmouth; also giving thanks for the release of Alan Johnston, while praying for those still held captive in that region; praying too for those who had died or been made homeless as a result of the recent flooding; and for the Archbishop of Canterbury on study leave.

Welcome to Anglican and Ecumenical Guests

The Chairman: As you know, Churches who send representatives here were asked in July to choose, and three have returned: Revd Professor Paul Fiddes (Baptist Union), Very Revd Archimandrite Ephrem Lash (Orthodox Churches) and Revd Nezlin Sterling (Black-led Churches). The five new representatives are Revd Dr Jane Craske (Methodist Church), Revd Gloria David (Moravian Church), Monsignor Andrew Faley (Roman Catholic Church), Revd Graham Maskery (United Reformed Church) and Revd Douglas Galbraith (Church of Scotland). Please welcome them. (*Applause*)

In addition to the eight ecumenical representatives who have been appointed for a three-year term, three Anglican and ecumenical guests are attending this particular group of sessions only though, unlike the ecumenical representatives, these three guests unfortunately do not have the right to speak. They are Rt Revd Mindaugas Sabutis (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania), Revd Dr Matti Repo (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) and Very Revd Desmond Harman (Church of Ireland). Please welcome them. (*Applause*)

Introduction of New Members

The Chairman: I introduce to Synod the Bishop of Oxford (Rt Revd John Pritchard), Mrs Lucy Docherty (Portsmouth), Mr Barry Higgins (Deaf Anglicans Together), Revd John Patrick (Lincoln), Revd John Plant (Leicester), and Revd John Wynburne (Oxford).

Address

The Chairman: It gives me great pleasure to invite Bishop Sabutis to address the Synod.

Rt Revd Mindaugas Sabutis (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania): Dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania and the representatives of other ecumenical partners of the Church of England, I have pleasure in expressing my deepest appreciation for the opportunity to take part in the General Synod of the Church of England. An impressive number of documents have been prepared for the Synod to enable you to reflect on the many challenges and important themes which need to be discussed and the many decisions that will be made. We always follow developments in the Church of England and we pray for you in your challenges.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania is very much a minority Church, having 20,000 members, the equivalent of 0.6 per cent of the Lithuanian people, who are predominantly Roman Catholic; but although we are so small we do not feel small or weak because of our very close links with other Churches. Being members of the Porvoo Communion we enjoy our partnership with the Church of England and we feel that we are one Church, one Body of Jesus Christ. Joy in the Church of England is also joy for us; pain in the Church of England is also pain for us. We are bound together by the cross and by the resurrection of Our Lord, which is the deepest level of unity, fellowship and partnership. That is much deeper than NATO and even the European Union because all earthly realities change but reality in Christ remains for ever.

During the coming days many of you will ask what is the truth, and what are the right solutions and decisions. We as Christians have only one truth, Jesus Christ, and usually we have a choice: we can, together with Pontius Pilate, ask 'What is truth?' or we can follow Jesus' footprints and remember his prayer: 'Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth'. We share the call to witness to the truth of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

I pray that the General Synod and all of us will remain in his Word and will let his Word and Spirit transform us and use us for his glory. (*Applause*)

Progress of Measures and Statutory Instruments

The Chairman: I report to Synod that the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure has been found expedient by the Ecclesiastical Committee and awaits consideration by Parliament. The Parsonages Measure (Amendment) Rules 2007 have been laid before Parliament and came into force on 1 May 2007. The National Institutions of the Church of England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2007 has been laid before Parliament and will come into force on 1 January 2008.

Statement on the Agenda

The Chairman: Before we move on to the next item of business I would like to explain to the Synod a change to the agenda that the Presidents have agreed in consequence of the important announcements made by the Prime Minister on Tuesday. Members should have found, on their seats or in their pigeonholes, a document *Church Appointments*

(GS1650A). Attached to it are relevant extracts of the Green Paper, the subject of Tuesday's exchange in the House of Commons and the responses. I am sure that the Synod will want to have an opportunity at this group of sessions to consider the implications of the Government's proposals in so far as they affect the Church. The Presidents have therefore directed, under SO 4(b), that a new motion be added to the order of business for Monday afternoon in substitution for Item 27, the 'take note' debate that the Bishop of Sheffield was to have moved, and Item 28, a motion in the name of the Bishop of Leicester. A copy of the new motion, which will be moved by the Bishop of Leicester, has been circulated on the fifth notice paper. The normal deadline will apply for the submission of amendments to the new motion, though that is not an encouragement!

THE CHAIR *Canon Elizabeth Paver (Sheffield)* took the Chair at 4.45 p.m.

Is Modern Childhood All That It Could Be?

The Chairman: From time to time distinguished figures from public life are invited to address the Synod. The Presidents have invited Professor Sir Albert Aynsley-Green, the Children's Commissioner, to address us today. Sir Al will speak about his understanding of the needs and aspirations of children and young people today, based on his work and that of the Office of the Children's Commissioner. This will form part of our preparation for the 2009 General Synod debate when we will have a longer opportunity to engage with the findings of the Good Childhood inquiry itself. Sir Al's address will be introduced by the Bishop of Leicester, Chair of The Children's Society, and we are very grateful that Sir Al has indicated that he is prepared to take some questions after his address.

The Bishop of Leicester (Rt Revd Tim Stevens): It is difficult to imagine a more significant and vital area of concern for this group of sessions to begin with than this question: is modern childhood all that it could be? The UNICEF report *Child Poverty in Perspective*, published in February, has become something of a wake-up call to Government, the voluntary sector and the Churches as we have begun to come to terms with the stark truth that, on many indicators of children's well-being, the United Kingdom comes near the bottom of the league of rich nations. I am delighted that the Good Childhood inquiry launched by The Children's Society last year is the first major independent inquiry into childhood in this country. It is proving to attract a huge amount of media interest already, only six months into its work. As well as a panel of academics and experts, the Society has ensured that children and young people are at the centre of the project through imaginative use of television, a dedicated website and other methods, so that many hundreds of submissions have been received from children. As well as our speaker this afternoon, it is very good that we are joined today by the chief executive of The Children's Society, and we welcome Bob Reitemeier here this afternoon.

Today, to address some of the issues, we welcome Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green,

appointed first Children's Commissioner in 2005, his task to be the independent voice for all children and young people and to represent their views, opinions, interests and rights to the people who make decisions that affect them. Please welcome him now as he addresses the question: is modern childhood all that it could be?

The Children's Commissioner (Professor Sir Albert Aynsley-Green): Thank you for the invitation to be here. It is a real delight as well as a huge privilege to have the chance to address Synod about whether modern childhood is all that it could be. I have a short time in which to introduce a very difficult and contentious topic, and I am delighted that in two years' time you will have much more opportunity to discuss the outcome of the Good Childhood inquiry. I am going to go through this fairly fast; you may have access afterwards to the slides that I shall show and, more important, you can access my organization's website.

We have a new identity, a new logo, a new brand, launched two months ago. When I was appointed two years ago my organization was called the Office of the Children's Commissioner. As soon as we started talking to children across the country, it was 'Al, boredom. Suits and boots'. That is the impression conveyed by that title. So we have worked very hard with children and young people across the country to find a more suitable identity which they can relate to and can own, and two months ago we launched our new brand. I am still the Children's Commissioner for England but the organization is '11 Million'. Why 11 Million? It is because there are 11 million children and young people in England.

Within each of these figures that I show you can see a whole range of icons. Each icon is an issue, identified by a child or group of children or young people, that they are concerned about. When we show them these icons they can latch on to the issue that they are concerned with or are interested in, and it is a fantastic ice-breaker. Our organization's strap-line is 'The 11 million children and young people in England have a voice', not 'have been given a voice' but 'have a voice'. I see myself as the front, if you like, for the 11 million children who inhabit our country. I want to encourage you to dial up our website – www.11MILLION.org.uk – and on it you will see everything we have done in the way of policy statements and in terms of updating our organization. Two months ago we launched our five-year strategic plan. I encourage you to dial it up on your computers tonight as it will give you a much better idea than I can convey in 20 minutes or so of the enormity of the task that we have to take forward.

We have worked with children across the country, and they have written our vision. This is what they want our country to be like for them and their successors in the future. Children and young people – and, by the way, I always refer to young people; adolescents are not children; they have different needs, different expectations, and I always refer to them, with respect, as young people – will be actively involved in shaping all decisions that affect their lives. (That is participation, not consultation. Consultation to them means that adults ask and adults decide. It is participation, engaging them in the issues that affect their lives. Everything our organization has done, from my

appointment, my staff, my premises, my design, my fit-out to my strategy, has been done with the engagement of children as equal partners in the process.) They will be supported to achieve their full potential through the provision of appropriate services and will live in homes and communities where their rights are respected and where they are loved and safe and enjoy life. This is what children have described and written for our organization. I hope that there will be no dissent from you in terms of the sentiments that we are expressing.

Against this aspiration what is the reality? The Bishop of Leicester has referred, as has our Chair, to the UNICEF report published earlier this year. Here are two of the headline pages of national broadsheet newspapers or national authoritative newspapers: 'Britain's children unhappy, neglected and poorly educated' and 'British children poorer, at greater risk and more insecure'. I was delighted, as someone who has worked for children for 30 years, that this issue received the coverage it did. There was a frenzy of coverage. My chief executive and I gave 32 radio and TV interviews in the space of 24 hours. There was a great divide in terms of opinion as to whether this was a true report or not. Here is the title page of the report and, if you have not done so, may I beg you to dip into it. It is a comprehensive assessment of the well-being of children and young people in the world's 21 richest countries. There were 47 indicators and six groups: material well-being, health and safety, education, peer and family relationships, behaviours and risks, and subjective well-being; and we came bottom, not even half-way down the list, out of the 21 richest countries, for five of the six groups, and overall we were bottom too.

For example, we have some of the highest rates of poverty in these countries. We have poor health among our children; two very good proxies are the high infant mortality and the low birth-rate, which are very good proxies for the quality of care being given to mothers during pregnancy and the attention they receive. Poor family and peer relationships; risky behaviour; alcohol indulgence; early sex, and one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in the developed world. Of special concern is their low expectations in life. CULF – the Commission for Urban Life and Faith, your organization – has already reported on the fact that only some 50 per cent or so of children have an expectation in their lives for employment, education and training; we have one of the highest rates of young people dropping out of school education, again with no sense of expectation, no sense of purpose, no sense of ambition in their lives. Especially searing is their low self-assessed well-being. This is just the latest in a series of reports. We had another report only a few days ago from the independent advisory group on sexual health among young people with very worrying data indeed.

So, quite rightly, a number of commentators asked if this report was actually true. Inevitably with 11 million children and young people in the country there will be a very wide range of experiences, and undoubtedly many parents say, 'This is irrelevant. We don't have a resonance with this' and many young people say, 'Al, this is outside our experience'. We have a range from the outstanding and the successful to the bleak and the appalling. For the past two years I have been touring the country; I have been

everywhere in England, from the inner city to the remote and rural, listening to children under the railway arches, in prison, facing deportation; and I come with three emotions to this Synod today. The first is exhilaration. Everywhere I have been I have found the most fantastic children and young people, who are so often unappreciated, unrecognized, unrespected, in their communities; they are children who face appalling difficulties with great courage. It is quite exhilarating. I am also faced with profound despair as I see the awfulness of so many children's lives today, children facing prostitution, physical abuse, sexual abuse, families breaking apart all the way round them, an explosion of crime, drugs, alcohol, you name it. Children are being exposed to the culture in our society today and the impact on many of them is truly appalling. My third emotion is anger, serious anger. How can we, in one of the richest countries in the world, be allowing this to happen under our very noses? Where is the outrage, from intellectuals, from you, from people like me, from children's doctors? Where is the outrage that we are failing so many of our children?

So it is a very difficult message: on the one hand, great recognition of the quality and success of so many of our children but, on the other, a harsh and awful reality. The challenge is to celebrate what is good. When do we do that? When do we ever celebrate the fact that we have children who are contributing to society in a meaningful way, while acknowledging that there is a problem to confront?

I am delighted to support generously the first national inquiry into childhood today, and Bob Reitemeier and I are good friends: we work together. I am on the board of the Good Childhood inquiry. It is a pleasure to see the reaction, to see the input coming in, about what people, especially children themselves, are feeling about their lives today, and I look forward to the conclusion of this reporting process and engaging in serious debate with its findings. However, the worrying context for me – and you may disagree with me when I say this – is that we are one of the most child-unfriendly nations in the developed world. You may swallow hard at that comment, and even become pale and sweaty. Let me give you some reasons why I speak with such passion on this. We refuse to give children the same protection as adults against assault. I am talking, of course, about child punishment within families. We have not followed the example of so many European countries in making it illegal, setting the symbol that children are people today who have the right to be protected from assault in just the same way as adults. We have failed to make the UN convention on the rights of the child real. Less than 25 per cent of children I meet know anything about the UN convention on the rights of the child. A quick dipstick: how many people in this Synod have read and understand the UN convention on the rights of the child? That is only a tiny percentage. Look, here is your second action point. You are going to dial up 11 Million. You are also going to dial up the UN convention on the rights of the child. It does not surprise me, what I have seen here. I find that even professional staff, working every day of the week with children, are completely unaware of the implications and the power of the UN convention on the rights of the child. There is an important opportunity because the UN committee will be holding the UK Government to account in the next few months for its progress in this matter.

There is the increasing media demonization: our research tells us that more than 70 per cent of media articles are negative towards children, especially young people: thugs, hoodies, yobs, feral, scum, menace, inhuman and sick are adjectives being used to describe our young people. Is it any wonder that they feel aggrieved at how they are being portrayed in the media? The local media are equally important. When you go back to your parishes, your locations, after the Synod, just ask yourself how your local newspaper is portraying children in your locality and what can be done to celebrate the fact that they are there and are contributing.

Then there is the use of the mosquito. You may not know about the mosquito. It is a device invented by a scientist who recognized that once you are over the age of 25 you cannot hear high-pitched noises. This device is now being marketed to be installed in shopping areas and malls and public spaces so as to emit an intermittent high-pitched and, to the young ear, highly irritating noise. It is being installed to disperse children. How can we accept that? It is indiscriminate. I was in Devon last week and a mother said to me, 'Al, we were waiting under a bowling alley canopy when it was raining, and my ten-year-old said to me, "Mummy, stop the terrible noise. Where's the noise coming from?"'. This is the indiscriminate targeting of young people, to break them up and stop them gathering. Why are they gathering? They feel safe together, and they have nowhere to go and nothing to do.

We have the creeping criminalization of children and young people, the support for applying ASBOs very often to young people who have learning difficulties or mental health problems, and the incarceration: we lock away more young people in this country than any other equivalent country in the developed world. We have the failure of services that should protect our children: we have just published our report on the plight of young people nursed in adult mental health wards. Our children are exposed to abuse, sexual exploitation and drug-taking, denied access to their parents, their families, their schoolmates, and denied education. This is the reality of many of our services today; we are failing to protect the most vulnerable.

Take the treatment of asylum-seeking children. I went to Lunar House in Croydon to see for myself the journey of a young asylum-seeker who is seeking refuge and safety in this country, and we will be publishing a report on that soon. What about the low tolerance of the sorts of thing that we did when we were young? Can anybody in this august body today put their hand on their heart and say, 'We never did anything when we were young', things that we would rather our friends, who see us now as pillars of local society, did not know about? There is a low tolerance of what children do in our society and, leading from that, inter-generational fracture. One of the most important social challenges for us is the schism between the young and the old. How are we going to break that down and what are we going to do about it?

I want to tell you about two children who died in prison. Adam Rickwood, aged 14, committed suicide after having 'distraction' for control: he was hit on the nose by an adult, painful distraction, and he committed suicide some hours later. A 14-year-old

committing suicide, in England! Then there was a 15-year-old who died after being restrained in prison by adults. We are very concerned about this issue because how we treat our most vulnerable children in, for example, prison is a barometer of how we see children generally in our society. There will be a debate in the House of Lords on Wednesday 18 July, and my plea to the Lords bishops is to go to that debate and take part in it because, in regard to the death of the two children, the coroner urged Government to clarify the law on the use of restraint. What has happened is that the Government have proposed an amendment which will actually extend the use of physical restraint 'for the purposes of good order and discipline'. If there is poor order and discipline, what does that say about the environment in which the most vulnerable children are being cared for? Lord Carlile will be leading the debate on 18 July and we beg the Lords bishops to go to that debate and to vote in it.

Our view is that physical restraint should only ever be used against a child when absolutely necessary to protect the child from harm to him- or herself or to others and not to punish or to secure compliance. What does this say about how we see children? Punishment and control? That is how we are seeing children in our society today. In one year there were over three thousand incidents of restraint, including this painful distraction in the four privately run secure training centres that hold, together, a maximum of about 250 children. Children, in prison: why is this being allowed to happen? We call for a public inquiry into the treatment of children in the criminal justice system, and we would like your views on this very important issue, a barometer of how we are seeing children in our society today.

Let me end by telling you what children are telling us. Everything I do and say is based on the legitimacy of having been informed by children and young people. So how do we get that knowledge from children and young people? There is a variety of ways: our web site, our younger assistant commissioners et cetera, but last year we ran a competition called 'Shout – turn up the volume', where we invited children across the country to write in to us about the issues that concerned them. To make it fun – and, my goodness, how we need fun in our lives – we invited them to send in their artwork – pictures, videos, poems – to describe their lives. We had several thousand responses. On analyzing them, we observed something very interesting. The images from the young children – we had four groups, two younger and two older – were, by and large, sunny images: the blue sky, the sun in the sky, the house, the mum and dad, the cat and the dog, sunny images of childhood; after the age of 10, almost without exception, those images were dark, of abuse, of being manipulated by adults, of terrorism, of climate change. One 16-year-old girl sent us her razor blade that she uses to cut herself in acts of self-harm. They were dark, depressing images, reflecting how children see the world they are living in. What do you think about that? How do you know what children in your parishes, your dioceses and your localities are thinking about the world in which they live?

So, from the analysis of this large database, what we know today – and I look forward to the Good Childhood inquiry's conclusions – is that children and young people want

the following. First of all, they want to be asked, to be listened to, to be heard and respected. Whenever I meet a child or young person I shake them by the hand. They are gob-smacked that an adult would shake them by the hand. I ask them why I do that, and they say, 'You are showing us respect'. Only 25 per cent of our intelligence tells us that young people are being asked for their opinions, let alone being listened to or heard. They want security and safety, an end to violence, and, above all, an end to family disruption. They are profoundly concerned about this staggering change in our society, with the change in family structures, with the decline in marriage and the increase in parental conflict; even children whose families appear to be stable tell us that they fear they will fall apart and they will experience what their friends have experienced. They want an end to bullying. Bullying is the most important issue, certainly in the school context, that children raise with us, and there is a state of denial in so many schools about the existence of bullying, let alone a lack of the tool-kits to address it. They want less anxiety and stress, and we very much support the move to reduce the number of tests and exams that children are subjected to. These tests are for political purposes, not for educational purposes, so when are we going to stop the endless testing of even young children in our schools today? They want a better school environment: 'Please, Al, help us enjoy school more'. Do your children enjoy your Church of England schools? Do you know? Have you asked them?

Knowledge and help in dealing with alcohol and drugs, non-judgemental information on sex and relationships: this is a serious issue. I have an endless stream of young people who come to me and say, 'Al, where can we turn for honest, reliable, sensible, authoritative, non-judgemental information on sex and on relationships?' There is a state of denial that children want to be informed. A 14-year-old girl said to me, 'Al, I'm studying quantum physics at school but sex is never discussed and I don't know anything about condoms'. This is not encouraging promiscuity. Where else will children get information if we do not give it to them in a meaningful, loving way in partnership with families? They will get it from pornography on the Internet. Is that the role model for relationships that we want to promote?

Then again, searingly, they want someone to turn to. How sad, how terrible, to hear so many children say, 'We have no one to turn to'. Parents should be doing that and many parents are doing that; I am delighted to support parents and their families with this; but sadly so many children do not have anyone to turn to, especially those, for example, in the care system. The outcomes for children in care are simply shocking in terms of their life chances, their exposure to crime, teenage pregnancy and so on. As corporate parents we have failed for far too long children in the care system, which is why I support unreservedly the new initiatives coming from Government about children in care.

What does all of this mean for the Church of England's schools? You have a staggering estate across the country, with many thousands of children and young people under your care and being educated. I think there are some very important things we should be thinking about. The first is the importance of this environment to establish values, to give children and young people a moral compass, as Martin Narey from Barnardo's has

said. How shocking that so few young people have a sense of expectation or a purpose in their lives. How do we do that is the question. Empathy and respect: I support SEAL – social and emotional aspects of learning – and I commend this process to you. This is a programme from Government to encourage primary schools to develop empathy and respect for each other. That must be the basis for relationships throughout life, understanding each other. I also commend to you the UNICEF ‘rights respecting schools’ programme. A hundred and fifty schools in England have signed up to the UNICEF rights respecting schools programme where the UNCRC is embedded rather than being a taught subject on a Friday afternoon. If there are such schools in your dioceses or parishes, please go and see them. It is a fantastic model for how children can work together in the context of rights.

When it comes to stopping bullying, please listen to your children on the existence, the severity and the extent of bullying. Many good things are being done in schools, and I acknowledge, support and applaud that; but so much still needs to be done with schools in a state of denial about the existence of bullying. Yesterday I went to a large conference organized by Stonewall, the gay and lesbian rights organization. They have just published a report, which you should read, on the extent of homophobic bullying in schools: staggering, shocking allegations even for children who are not of that way of life. Recognize that it is there. What are you going to do about tackling it?

How can you get the children in your schools to enjoy them more? Please ask them, for a starting-point, ‘Are you enjoying school? If not, what’s stopping you enjoying school?’ Then how can we use these schools in inter-generational healing, bringing the older generation together with the young generation?

Finally, what is to be done? Ask, listen and hear what children have to say. It is a challenge to adults who see their power, their patronage, their authority being diminished. That is not so. I am sure you are doing it in your own families, but we need to ask, listen to and hear what children have to say about their lives, engage them in participation and not consultation, seize the opportunity of Government’s outstanding programme Every Child Matters. No other country in the world – and I have been round the world – has Every Child Matters, a policy programme for children; and now we have a new Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, a Cabinet post for the very first time ever, right at the heart of Government, signalling the crucial importance of children to Government. Let us celebrate the existence of children and young people. Where there are children and young people in your circles who are doing fantastic things for the community, for themselves, for their families, how do you celebrate that? One way that you might consider is the children’s ‘Takeover Day’ on 23 November – we are promoting this from 11 Million – where children will be show-cased by organizations that work with them, by showing them how we can relate to each other. For example, the BBC, for the first time ever, on *Newsround* will have young reporters, young studio technicians, young editors and young presenters, talking about the issues that concern them. The Church, of course, has a glorious tradition of boy bishops! So can I encourage you on 23 November to allow children and young

people to take over your jobs, to work with you, so that you can show how you respect and appreciate their contributions?

Be effective advocates. One of the reasons, I argue, why we are so abysmal in the league-table is that we have failed to be effective advocates, especially for the most vulnerable in our society. Express your outrage over the handling of the most vulnerable. Think back 200 years to churchmen and churches, the social reformers, who led the society of the day with its appalling impact on children; they led society. If you are as outraged as I am over the plight of so many children, what are you doing about it and what are you saying about it?

I end with this quotation from Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her moving poem of nearly 200 years ago:

Now tell the poor young children, O my brothers,
 Look up to him and pray,
 So the blessèd One, who blesseth all the others,
 Will bless them another day.
 They answer, 'Who is God that he should hear us,
 While the rushing of the iron wheels is stirred?
 When we sob aloud, the human creatures near us
 Pass by, hearing not, or answer not a word.
 And *we* hear not (for the wheels in their sounding)
 Strangers speaking at the door.
 Is it likely God, with angels singing round him,
 Hears our weeping any more?'

This is a poem written from the outrage felt by Elizabeth Barrett Browning at what society was doing to Victorian children. Where is your outrage at the plight of our children in our contemporary society?

My last slide: what're you going to do, pal? It is not what Government are going to do, and not what I can do; it is what you can do. So as part of your deliberations please think of three things each of you can do in the light of what I have been talking about, that you will do in your localities, in your networks, to improve the plight of so many of our children who are facing appalling difficulties, whilst at the same time rightly celebrating those who are successful, those who are succeeding, those who do have privilege and those who do make contributions to our life.

Thank you for your attention. (*Applause*)

The Chairman: Thank you so much. We have time for one or two questions.

The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Stephen Venner): Acting as chairman of the Church of England's Board of Education, may I first of all thank you very much for your

presentation? I would like to assure you that the Board and, I hope, diocesan boards will take very seriously the challenges, because we are in touch with a phenomenal number of children day by day, not just in schools but in all the voluntary work we do. I would just like you to share with us, if you would, some of your hopes and challenges for the new Department of Children, Schools and Families. It seems to me that part of the positive move of Government there is that it links in with what is happening at county level and local level with children's trusts, and if you could say just a word or two about that I would be grateful.

The Children's Commissioner: I would be delighted to do so. The student of the history of childhood will look back at the past 15 years with amazement because in that time we have had some of the most important policies for children ever described. Why? How? It started in 1997 with New Labour being elected to government and the commissioning of the inequalities report by Sir Donald Acheson. That revealed and emphasized the wide inequalities in our society. That was seized upon by Gordon Brown, the then Chancellor, and the Government because they were concerned about the economic capital for children: the traditional Marxist view of children, that children are the workers of the future and, if we do not get it right for children as a society, for our workforce, we will be in trouble. That led to the introduction of Sure Start programmes et cetera. We then had the two national scandals, of children and heart surgery in Bristol – Sir Ian Kennedy's report, which blew the lid off any complacency about health care for children across the country – and the murder of Victoria Climbié, reported on by Lord Laming, another cataclysmic report showing how awful the services were and their failure to support the most vulnerable. There was also the personal commitment from the very top, and the contribution from Tony Blair and Gordon Brown has been profound. I am not speaking for New Labour here; I am speaking as an observer of the history of childhood. That has led to the social policies we now have for children – Every Child Matters – and, as I have said, no other country I have been to has these policies.

We have thus come a long way in seven years. We now have a Cabinet Minister, we have a Commissioner, we have policies, we have advice. The challenge now is translating those wonderful words of philosophy and policy into action at the local level. That is the challenge. Every way we turn we are bunkered and siloed by traditional professional barriers, funding streams et cetera. So children's trusts are a very interesting and important way of bringing together all the agencies in a locality. There are places I have been to which are doing very good things. I have been to Leicester recently to see what is happening there. The new directors of children's services are doing their very best, but let us not underestimate the enormous size of the difficulty, compounded particularly by the bunkers and the silos. Getting people together and translating this policy into action is the key challenge and that is what I have lobbied already at our new Secretary of State and Ministers. We have opportunity; we have to deliver, by getting people locally to take account of this and to own it.

Mr Nick Harding (Southwell and Nottingham): I find this in my work as a diocesan

children's officer: the biggest challenge is to get adults to accept that children did not create the society that they live in. How do we do that? I know it is a difficult question, Sir Al, but I would love to hear your answer.

The Children's Commissioner: Yes, it is a very difficult question to answer but recognizing there is a problem is the first and very important step on this journey, which is why UNICEF has been the ultimate wake-up call to us. So recognizing that there is a problem and acknowledging that it exists is key. We then have to find that very small number of people who will be leaders, to lead this. We cannot expect everybody to become leaders and change this; we have to find in the organizations and the Churches and the communities and the professional organizations those people who can be empowered to lead this change. We need to speak for children. We need to engage with the media. I am appalled by the way the media perpetually misrepresent the views, the interests and the needs of children and young people. We must speak out. This is why I come back to my point about being effective advocates for children in our society. We must express our outrage that we have so many children who are facing such appalling difficulties.

Change will therefore happen because a relatively small number of people will make it happen, and that is what happened in Victorian times.

Mrs Christina Rees (St Albans and Archbishops' Council): I want to thank you so much, as others have already thanked you, for coming, and I do think you are addressing the most important subject that we shall be discussing at these sessions of Synod. Some of the emotions that you bring are, I know, brought by a lot of us as well. One thing is clear. We have all been children and young people. Most of us here are no longer children and young people. Some of us do not have children and young people in our lives. However, you have spent the past two years working with them, and going round listening to them, and some of what you have said is so good for us as the Established Church and all that is going on at that level; all Christian Churches and all right-minded faith groups and non-faith groups would actually want to do something about this issue. I would like you to tell us what you have come away with personally in the past two years. What is the message that you would really like to give us about what we can all start doing now?

The Children's Commissioner: I have expressed my emotions of exhilaration, despair and anger. I think that the over-riding point I would make to you is that the children I am meeting today are our future. They are citizens today – and I use that word quite deliberately although citizenship for children may be a concept that is difficult to accept – but they will be the parents of the future, the doctors, the priests, the lawyers, the engineers of the future. They need to have the opportunities to develop their full potential, and so often they are frustrated in that because of us, the adults, the way we see the world, the way we organize our services and the way we fail to recognize their opportunities. So it is a question of looking to the future and being optimistic about that. Despite the gloom and the sorrow I bring to you today, I also want to emphasize

the fact that there are so many children around who give me enormous confidence that they are thinking seriously about the future. Take racism, for example. I am delighted to see even young children in my travels angry about racism, and they want it stamped out.

My final point is about what role models we offer as adults to children. I talked about bullying as the big concern but bullying is found throughout society. Bullying may even be in the Church, though I hesitate to say that. Why do we allow the gratuitous promotion of violence in our society for monetary gain? Who are these people who are manipulating our world, shaping our childhood, by portraying this endless violence, which is so destructive of our society?

Revd Brunel James (Ripon and Leeds): Professor, you talked about the history of childhood, and you have given a presentation to us which is really in wholly secular terms; but surely the misdeeds of the adults that cause children to suffer and the profound confusion and distress that so many children feel is closely related to the process of secularization that has taken place over the past 50 years, the erosion of spirituality and sense of accountability, with church attendance creating a sense of community?

The Children's Commissioner: Faiths are extraordinarily important. I have just read Richard Dawkins's *The God Delusion*; I am sure most of you have read that as well. He makes some very articulate and persuasive arguments. However, the binding together of the community can occur in a number of different ways, and faiths are one of the ways of doing just that. I think that the school is a critically important focal point for our communities for the future. I welcome the extended school, for example, in reaching out to schools; but how we give children the moral compass is the big challenge, and I do not have an easy answer to that. If you do have a faith, then it is easier – you can follow your faith constructs and your faith beliefs – but if you have children who are not brought up with any sense of faith it is very much more difficult. I do not have an easy answer. I would welcome your views, your contributions and your debate on this.

Miss Emma Forward (Exeter): I am very grateful for what the last speaker just said. I want to say something very similar, so I may get a very brief response from you. I was pleased to see that one of your goals is to have this moral compass, because I also feel, as a young person and a teacher myself, who spends a lot of time with young people, day in, day out, that what children are confused about, even in Church of England schools, is their identity as a Christian and their role as a Christian. I really feel that in Church of England schools, in particular, we should be crystal clear and very definite about who God is, who Jesus is, and how children should live their lives as Christians in future. As the last speaker said, in an increasingly secular society, in a society where anything goes in terms of religion – 'whatever you feel: that is OK' – we need, as a Church and in Church of England schools, to be really clear about the real God.
(Applause)

The Children's Commissioner: That is clearly a point which has great resonance with the audience, and I welcome debate about it. I would just make one final point, if I may. I went to a school in north London for Orthodox Jewish children, and I spent the afternoon with young women, 15- and 16-year-olds, and I have to say, of all the young people I have met in recent months, they were the ones who were most confident of their lives. They told me they were here to do God's purpose, that their role was with the family, and they knew what they expected from life and how they were going to get it. They were incredibly confident young people. I then said to them, 'How many of you have ever been to the home of a Christian? How many of you have ever been to the home of a Muslim or a Sikh or a Hindu?'. They said, 'Never. We have never been to the homes of children of other faiths'. I then asked them if it would not be a good idea if we did have some dialogue and some better understanding, and they said Yes. Their teachers became very pale and sweaty at that suggestion! We have to reach out to others as well as having the confidence of whatever faith we have. We must reach out, and we must try to get a much better understanding if we are going to be a cohesive society in the future, with the young people understanding each other.

The Chairman: Thank you so much, Sir Al. May I, on behalf of the whole Synod, I am sure, say that we are often accused in this place of not engaging in the topics that are most important for our country. You have set off this session of our synodical debates right at the heart of what is most important, so thank you very much. It was a personal pleasure that there is a Commissioner for Children; I have spent 30 years as a headteacher, and we share much of what you have been saying today. You heard the questions but will anyone who wants to engage with this please be in touch with you, get on the website, be active, because the one message today has surely been that we engage with you in your work. We thank you very much indeed. (*Applause*)

THE CHAIR *The Bishop of Sheffield (Rt Revd Jack Nicholls)* took the Chair at 5.32 p.m.

Report by the Business Committee (GS 1657)

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: I beg to move:

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

Much of the thinking behind and organization of the agenda for this group of sessions has been explained in the Business Committee's report, but I would like to give just a bit of background to some of the decisions that the Committee reached and mention one or two issues that continue to exercise us.

The Committee was aware of the dissatisfaction of many about the rather erratic progress of the Marriage Measure. Tomorrow morning there will be a further revision stage debate, and the revision committee has worked hard to make it possible for Synod to have the chance to look again at this issue. To ensure maximum flexibility, the

Business Committee has given permission, under SO 58(b), for consideration even of amendments considered in the original revision committee stage. We have also scheduled a final approval debate for Tuesday morning, but a decision will have to be reached (dependent on the outcome of tomorrow's debate) as to whether it will be possible to take final approval this week, or whether we need to wait until February. I will advise Synod as soon as that decision has been made.

Synod is, as we have just seen, a learning and listening body as well as a decision-making one, and we are fortunate to welcome some speakers to inform our thinking on important issues. The Most Revd Drexel Gomez, Archbishop of the West Indies, will speak on the Anglican Covenant. We have just heard Professor Sir Albert Aynsley-Green sharing some of his findings on the needs and aspirations of our children and young people, and Sir Joseph Pilling will address us before the debate on senior Church appointments.

The Committee has spent some time discussing the handling of Diocesan Synod Motions generally, and the specific question of the Southwark motion on the Act of Synod. After much deliberation, and after reference to those closely involved, the decision was made that while the Manchester group was at work it would not be helpful to debate this motion. Another Southwark Diocesan Synod Motion will be debated, however, on the subject of the status and accountability of the Church Commissioners. The Church Commissioners' report will be handled rather differently this year. Instead of a debate there will be an introduction by the First Estates Commissioner and then the opportunity for questions from the floor. It would be very helpful to the Chair of that debate, if you know you want to ask a question, to put in a 'request to speak' form.

The agenda includes important debates on pensions, on disability issues, on the full participation of minority ethnic Anglicans in our Church, on the Anglican-Methodist Covenant and, of course, on the budget. There are two Private Members' Motions included, one on Iran and one on ethical investment, and there will be an opportunity to celebrate with the Church Army their contribution to the life of the Church over 125 years.

The debate on liturgical formation will highlight the *Transforming Worship* initiative, the outcome of work by the Liturgical Commission and the Royal School of Church Music, and we are grateful to those bodies and to the Synod chaplain for the work they have done together in preparing the pattern of worship which will run through this group of sessions.

We have had much discussion on the issue of the group work that is normally included in the July group of sessions. We know that many people feel that this is an important way in which our work at Synod can be grounded in our faith, and it also provides an opportunity for members to speak and listen to one another in a more informal setting than in debate. Others, of course, feel that we come to Synod to debate and decide and

that this is not the right place or occasion for this sort of work. We had representation, however, from the Standing Committee of the House of Clergy that we should encourage members to take part, whatever their inclinations, as it is very disheartening for those that do go if others appear to give it little priority. This year we have asked Dr Richard Burrige to prepare and present a Bible study for the groups and, after his introduction of the material later this afternoon, the groups will meet tomorrow morning after breakfast. We are very grateful to Dr Burrige for the time and the energy he has put into the preparation of this work. Both he and the committee would be very grateful for any feedback from members about the exercise, and provision has been made at the desk for members to make any constructive comments. These comments will be considered by the committee at our September meeting, together with members' suggestions about Synod Question Time. We will receive advice then on the security aspects of electronic voting and we will discuss Synod worship with the new chaplain. We will also be considering environmental issues arising from meetings of Synod. Members' comments on any of these would be welcomed.

The Chairman imposed a speech limit of three minutes.

Mr John Freeman (Chester): I would just like to say a big thank-you for sticking to the A4 format and offer my congratulations because my envelope arrived this year all in the right order. I did not have to spread it out on the dining-room table and sort it. It was great. Keep up the good work! Thank you very much.

Revd Canon Chris Sugden (Oxford): I wondered if I was the only one here for whom it took some time to realize the magnitude of the destruction and death that the three car bombs in London and Glasgow could have caused, particularly among a large number of young people, had they succeeded in their purpose. It was certainly at least in part due to the alertness and the courage of our public servants and services that these were thwarted. It was Archbishop William Temple who said that when he prayed coincidences happened and when he did not pray they ceased. Our liturgy provides for regular prayer for safety for our rulers and, by implication, for our national life, in both England and Scotland. May I commend to this Synod of our national Church a request that this first session close with a prayer of thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the immediate great dangers that these car bombs posed. I note that the Bishop of London is in the chamber.

Mr John Davies (Winchester): I would like to congratulate the Business Committee on the opportunity to hear the presentation by the Children's Commissioner. Like Church schools, it is a great area to demonstrate the love of Jesus. It is an area where voluntary Christian action can sometimes be more responsive and cost-effective than the regulated machinery of Government, an area where Christian witness and social action can work hand in hand. I have a feeling that all too often at Synod we get into areas where our words, however well-intentioned, are ineffectual and bear little fruit apart from polite letters from Ministers, occasionally from customer service managers, and

hardly a media report. James tells us that faith without action is a lifeless thing; maybe well-intentioned words without practical results are much the same.

I would like to ask the Business Committee to enable us to focus even more of the available agenda time, first, on growing our Church and, second, on getting involved in areas where long-term Christian action is effective, changing our broken society through reaching people one by one, and leave the Government stuff like defence to Governments. Ultimately Governments, whether they like it or not, answer directly to God as well as to their electorate. The achievements of Hannah More, John Venn, William Wilberforce and other members of the Clapham group two hundred years ago are a great case study. Focused on the gospel, their work for the Church Mission Society, penal reform, education, the RSPCA, the Sunday school movement, the abolition of the slave trade and slavery itself was all advanced. They changed the face of British society and they have today significant and lasting global influence.

Would such an approach on witness and social action work today from small beginnings? Well, about the time of the Synod elections I came into contact with an independent congregation in London of about 2,000 people, average age 25, who were noted for their contemporary music. Last Christmas they provided 350 volunteers for homeless shelters, and about 450 African orphans are sponsored by church members; in the past 12 months over 6,000 people made new commitments of faith during worship and over 8,000 people now attend their services each week. In April they held their first three-day women's conference at the Albert Hall, attended by 3,500 delegates from 501 churches, 24 denominations and 32 countries. Not a mention was made during the conference of human sexuality issues. They come into contact with people on a daily basis and they find favour and the Lord adds to their numbers daily.

I know that we are primarily a legislative body but I would ask the Business Committee to find more time to be devoted to mission and social action issues.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Over the years that I have been on Synod I have noticed a change to the style and content of the papers that we get, and I am sure that those members who came on to Synod recently and maybe for the first time in this quinquennium went through the same learning curve that I went through back in 1995 of having six pounds or more, in weight – I am sorry, I am still not yet metric – of papers coming through the door on a regular basis. I welcome the fact that they have changed. The report that we have before us on the Covenant is particularly good in the sense that it has some informative stuff from the people who are going to be talking to us, or going to be objecting, or whatever. However, there are still a number of reports which need reform – reforming, I should say! – and this is the way in which they need to be reformed. Can the Business Committee please try to encourage those who author reports to put the list of those involved in the production of the reports in an appendix and can they make sure that there is a summary of the recommendations of the report on the first couple of pages of each of these documents? It would make reading so much

easier for those people who are still busily trying to work out which piece of paper to read first.

Mr David Jones (Salisbury): I would like to say something about the debate on the Anglican Covenant because I think that, if the Covenant goes through and the bishops and the archbishops support it, it will actually have a considerable effect on the powers of the Synod because presumably any agreement made at Lambeth will be an imposition on us. It concerns me that, although we have the opportunity to debate the Covenant on Sunday, we will not have the opportunity to debate the final submission which the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council will put to the Lambeth body at the end of the year. This seems to me the wrong way round. Surely we are the legislative body, and we should be the people who have the most influence, as the whole Church, in any submission? I wonder if it is possible either for us to have a meeting in November to look at the final submission – just a day or an afternoon, just one session – or whether we can delay our submission as the Church of England until after the February group of sessions. It is very important and whatever is agreed, I think I am right in saying, will be binding on the Church. Otherwise what is the point of having such a commitment?

Mrs Gill Ambrose (Ely): I did not think I would find myself saying this. First of all, I would like to say thank you for the opportunity to hear Al Aynsley-Green here, but I am disappointed that there has not been a forum in which we can tackle what it is that he has said. It was very informative. He set us a lot of challenges. I hope therefore that there will be a possibility of coming back to that before the next scheduled debate about children. There were a lot of things that he said which I would like to take up, having had 20 years as a children's work adviser in the Church, which in some ways was quite a bruising experience; and I would like us to be able to share the kind of things that he was saying and to recognize that in the heart of our institution lay some of the things that he said. It is a pity that we did not have time to debate this more fully.

Revd Canon Simon Killwick (Manchester): We are all familiar with the way that various organizations and groups circulate us with booklets and other literature, commenting on items on our agenda. I do not know if I was the only one, though, to be just slightly surprised that 50 per cent of the report on the Anglican Covenant was the submission from the Modern Churchpeople's Union. I do not want to say necessarily that that was a bad thing, but I would like to ask the Chair of the Business Committee whether it is a precedent that may be used again in the future and, if so, if other interested groups and parties will also be invited to send in submissions which can then be included in the main report which will be distributed to Synod members. It might save those organizations a fortune in postage were that to take place.

One final comment about the Modern Churchpeople's Union submission is that it seems to have been written before the draft Covenant, which is in the appendix at the back of the report, came, so from that point of view it seems particularly unfortunate that the submission takes up 50 per cent of the report yet it is aimed at a different draft Covenant from the one which is actually in the report.

Revd David Griffiths (Manchester): I too should like to compliment the Committee on the usual job that they have done, but I wonder if Prebendary Garlick could expand on their strategy to support and help the chairing of debates. Following the February group of sessions, I was encouraged by a number of members to write to the Committee, following our experience of some of the chairing that happened. The task of chairing debates is not easy – even more so with the arrangement in London – and debates are frequently complicated, and quite often there is not going to be enough time for people to speak; but I think that those who chair debates need more help to ensure that those who have taken trouble to prepare and have indicated their wish to speak do get called, and not just those who are familiar faces or, dare I say, Synod celebrities. Maybe there is also an appeal in there for some people to exercise some self-denial. I had indicated a wish to speak in the Trident debate and was not called. Perhaps that was my bad luck, but then I found that another Manchester member had wanted to speak in the gay and lesbian debate but was not called, while the same person was chosen to open the batting, as it were, in both the gay and lesbian and the civil partnership debates. Another member, who had from their own experience and from a briefing by our director of education for the education debate asked to speak, was called only when the speech limit had finally been cut to something like three minutes, after many people had been called who either had not indicated that they wanted to speak or had spoken a number of times earlier in the sessions. I do not think that this is just a problem for Manchester members!

I want to reiterate that I am aware of some of the difficulties of chairing debates and I think that we are fortunate in those who take on that important role, but would the Chair of the Business Committee indicate the strategies that are in place to support Chairs in their role and perhaps avoid a greater number of people resorting to amendments in order to ensure that they are called to speak?

Mrs Elaine Storkey (Ely): Following the last two speakers, I think it is very important to make sure that we have the right Chairs and their help for the debate, but it is also important to have the debate and I notice, with Gill Ambrose, that we have no fewer than six presentations in this group of sessions and in fact on Monday I believe that SO 97 is going to be appealed to three times in order for Synod to hear presentations. The problem with presentations is that usually there is no debate following them. I am delighted with presentations; I love to see pictures, and I think that, living in a visual age, we need both words and pictures; but I wonder if the Business Committee could actually think about the way in which we could incorporate more debate into presentations rather than putting someone six feet above contradiction.

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick, in reply: Thank you to everyone who has spoken, and I will try to get through all of them.

Thank you very much to John Freeman, who thanked me: that is wonderful! Your materials were in the right order, and I hope that they are very clear. For that we have to thank the staff who work so hard to try to get it right for you. (*Applause*) I think that we

all share Dr Chris Sugden's concerns about terrorists, and I am sure that the Archbishop will have heard his request for perhaps some prayer during this session.

John Davies wanted more time on vision and social action and so on, and on mission. The Business Committee do not initiate what comes to Synod; we try to put it into some sort of order that makes some kind of sense, but if members want a matter to be debated they have to do something about it. I suggest that Private Members' Motions and Diocesan Synod Motions are the way that any member can begin that process. Otherwise I suggest talking to your bishop to bring things up at the House of Bishops, talking to people who are on the boards and councils, and so on. The Business Committee, however, can only work with what we are offered. So get on and do that!

Tim Hind: the papers, style, content and weight but still reform needed. We have heard, and I will take that back to the Committee, about listing those involved in an appendix and a summary at the beginning. Any other ideas like that, which would really help, let us know.

David Jones talked about the Covenant debate. We must be very clear that the debate we are having at this group of sessions is not approving any Covenant and certainly not approving this draft of the Covenant. What this debate is about is the process, really: do we or do we not agree that this is a good process to enter into? He is quite right that the first comments on this first draft do have to be in by the end of this year, but this is only very much a first draft; there will be other drafts and, of course, they will come back and, of course, in the end this Synod will have to see and approve anything that is going to change, as he said, the way that we work. Simon Killwick commented on the Covenant report. The reason the paper took the form it did was because the House of Bishops felt that, having given their very strong push towards the Covenant and why it is a good idea, the other side needed hearing, and so it was put there for balance, really, to make sure that it was a balanced document.

Gill Ambrose, with all of us, thanked Sir Al Aynsley-Green for his address to us but regrets that there was no debate. We had a lot of discussion about whether we should have a full-scale debate at this group of sessions. The feeling was that we did not want to pre-empt the debate that we will be having in 2009; the inquiry that is going on, which The Children's Society is doing, is only at the beginning of its work; it has not finished, it is an on-going process and when the report is published and we have it to look at, of course, we will have a full-scale debate here.

Elaine Storkey talked about perhaps needing more debates. I do not know if she was talking about fewer presentations or whether the presentations need somehow to turn themselves into debates. In a way we are trying to do this, for instance, with the Church Commissioners' presentation or address or whatever you want to call it; one of our problems is that we do not have a name for anything, and anything that is not a debate becomes a presentation. The Church Commissioners are doing as they are doing in order that there can be more to and fro, more questions and answers; in a debate, a

speaker could come up here and ignore the difficult questions if he or she wanted to. If we have question and answer, it makes for a good to and fro. We will see how that goes and you tell us what you think.

Finally, in reply to David Griffiths and how we help and support the Chairs, there are strategies in place in that I meet Chairs before every group of sessions and at the end of every group of sessions to talk about what is coming up and how things might go and afterwards to see how things went. Also any grievance, any comment that is made by a member about the chairing of a particular debate, will always be taken up with that particular Chair. In between groups of sessions a good deal of work goes on, and some of that work is this interaction between the Chair and us and so on about things that have gone wrong and how we can improve them.

The motion was put and carried.

Variation in the Order of Business

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick: Due to a printing error – and it was just really in the printing – a couple of rubrics that had been agreed by the Business Committee were omitted from the final copy of the agenda, so I want to ask your permission, Chair, to insert them again. On Monday, on the disability issues debate, we wanted to put a ‘no later than 12 noon’, and on the Church Army presentation ‘no later than 5.45 p.m.’. Some members may have noticed – it was my archdeacon who pointed it out to me – that, according to the agenda, on Sunday evening the session was going to end at 10.30 p.m., but it will end, as usual, at 10.00 p.m.

The Chairman: That has my permission. Has it the consent of Synod? (*Agreed*)

Preparation for Group Work

Revd Dr Richard Burridge (London University): What does it mean to be ‘biblical’? This is a question which has fascinated me all my life and has formed the focus of my research as a New Testament scholar. Alongside it, another, equally important, question has dogged me: what does it mean to ‘love one another as I have loved you’ (John 15.12) and ‘to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’ (Ephesians 4.3)?

These two concerns – to be biblical and to maintain the unity of the Church in love – are sometimes seen as contrasts, especially in some debate at present; yet my own research project over the past decade into how the Bible is used in ethics, particularly under *apartheid* in South Africa, has convinced me that any choice between being biblical and the unity of the Church is a false dichotomy, since the one requires the other. The command to love one another within the unity of the Christian community is a biblical imperative, which comes time and time again throughout the scriptures. Being biblical is more than just extracting a few verses or quoting some favourite texts. It requires listening to the whole message of the scriptures across the entire canon. It demands

attention to the biblical books as books, whole texts in their own right, rather than merely as sources for a few verses.

Such thoughts made me choose 1 Corinthians for this year's Bible study groups. Please note that, possibly foolhardily, it is 1 Corinthians as a whole that I have chosen, not a verse, nor a section nor even a chapter but the whole epistle; so you were asked in the last mailing to read this letter before the group of sessions and to bring a Bible with you.

Of course, I chose this epistle with some trepidation, given that the Synod includes a world expert on 1 Corinthians, Professor Anthony Thiselton. I am delighted that he will be signing copies of his new *Shorter Commentary on 1 Corinthians* over refreshments in the Exhibition Centre just across the lake – of course, he will walk on water – after this session. Only Tony could call a book of over 300 pages a *Shorter Commentary*. However, his definitive academic commentary is over 1,500 pages and this new exegesis is full of insights for pastoral ministry.

Elsewhere, in an important article in *Neotestamentica*, Thiselton has argued that, contrary to usual critical expectations, historical research on Corinth brings 'unexpectedly close parallels with issues' which we face today, including 'consumerism, local theology and a post-modern mood'. Corinth in Paul's time was a fascinating city with many parallels with our multi-cultural, highly diverse society today. Dr Paula Gooder, a lay member from Birmingham and another specialist on the Corinthian correspondence, has kindly provided us with some brief background about ancient Corinth, and this is in the notes that members will have picked up when registering this afternoon. So having members from our universities can make some contributions to our life together in Synod!

Paul's Corinth was the second ancient city on that site. The first, dating from archaic and classical times, was destroyed by the Romans in 146 BC, who left the area desolate for a hundred years. So Corinth knew the total destruction of a holocaust, and it had been rebuilt over the century before Paul, back into a thriving, multi-cultural international city. Its prosperity came from its location at the centre not just of Greece but of the Roman empire as a whole, the crossroads between north and south and between east and west. Everybody went through Corinth. As well as the trade coming into the city, it had its own industries, such as pottery, and was surrounded by wealthy arable land. In addition, it held the prestigious Isthmian games every two years, which brought great profit, especially since, unlike London in 2012, they did not have to build a new athletes' village or stadium every time.

It was also a major religious centre, with temples to the Roman imperial cult, and traditional Roman and Greek Olympian deities, as well as shrines to newer mystery cults, such as Mithraism, and a sizeable Jewish population: a truly multi-faith society, unlike anything seen until our own day. As a centre of *nouveau riche* and socially upwardly mobile business people, it was full of competing groups and individuals keen to advance themselves and their interests. There is a wonderful monument that not

only tells us (twice) that it was ‘erected by Gnaeus Babbius Philinus (probably a freed slave) at his own expense’ but also that the same Gnaeus Babbius Philinus had approved it in his capacity as *duovir*, one of the two chief magistrates. The new wealth, the social mobility and the self-advancement all sound very familiar in the world of *The Apprentice* today.

Into the middle of all this strides Paul, founding Christian churches (see Acts 18) which combined Jews and Gentiles alike with such success that fairly rapidly there were several different congregations – ‘fresh expressions’ you might call them – meeting around the city in various people’s homes, those of Phoebe, Aquila and Priscilla, and Gaius, with just as much variety, self-advancement and even rivalry among them as in the rest of the city. So I have asked members to read the whole letter and not just any one chapter, for throughout Paul is trying to deal with all this diversity and one-upmanship among his converts and to answer their many questions. I would therefore like to encourage members to read the whole letter before you go to bed tonight or when you wake up in the morning and grab your Gideon Bible, as I am sure all good Synod members do. It will not take long, but read it as though you have just got the post and there is this epistle from the apostle. We usually read our letters straight through when we get them, rather than study just one paragraph. Can you see how Paul is trying to handle all this diversity among his audience and yet, at the same time, bring them closer to God and to one another?

Tomorrow morning we have the Bible study groups after breakfast to attempt the impossible: looking at the letter as a whole and without the aid of a safety net. I am trying to find a middle way – I am a good Anglican – between a generalized discussion, jumping off from a verse or two, and the more detailed analysis of a very small section, both of which we have done in Synod groups over recent years. Instead, we are going to trace this overall theme of handling unity within the diversity of the Christian community and trying to relate what Paul tells the Corinthians to today.

The study is in several sections, each with three parts. In section (a) we begin with the text, looking at the context of a couple of chapters which we will not have time to read (hence my appeal to you to read the whole letter beforehand) and from which I have extracted a couple of verses. Then we want to relate that material both to the Corinthians’ day and to our own. Section (b) each time therefore asks questions about how this biblical material might have been understood by Paul’s original audience and how they might have applied it to the tensions facing them. On the other hand, section (c) asks you to relate it to our issues – which is, of course, a massive task: we cannot handle all the hot potatoes facing the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion, nor get bogged down in them – and to place them in this overall theme of how a Christian community finds its unity in the midst of plurality and difference.

That is rather a lot to get through and yet it is nowhere near all the possible material in this epistle. Some elements have had to be omitted, such as, for instance, how our

behaviour in worship affects our unity and relationships as in 1 Corinthians 10 and 14, since we shall come to that in the Liturgical Commission's presentation and debate on Saturday evening. However, my earnest hope is that this study may also help us in our other debates, like how we view other Christians in the sessions about the proposed Anglican Covenant and the Lambeth Conference as well as our relationships with the Methodist Church. Then there is how we participate in our own multi-cultural and financially thrusting society in the debates about ethnic minorities on Sunday evening and on ethical investment on Monday afternoon.

Throughout it all, I pray that these Bible studies will enable us to hear Paul's plea to his diverse and wrangling early Christian communities to have regard for the other in deep and mutual Christian love, and not to make our concerns or habits a stumbling block for others. In how we relate to each other as a Synod, both corporately and individually, we have to find that 'still more excellent way' of love, which imitates and reflects the example of Jesus Christ, being 'patient and kind . . . not insisting on its own way . . . believing all things, hoping all things and enduring all things' since while 'faith, hope and love abide, the greatest of these is love'.

(Adjournment)

THE CHAIR *Sister Anne Williams (Durham)* took the Chair at 8.30 p.m.

Welcome to Young Adult Observers

Before we commence this item of business, may I welcome the young adult observers who are here.

(Applause)

Questions

Questions asked in accordance with Standing Orders 105–109 were answered as follows, those for written answer being marked with an asterisk:

Crown Nominations Commission

1. *Mr Paul Eddy (Winchester)* asked the Chairman of the Crown Nominations Commission:

Given past experience, when the Commission told bishops it could only cope with two vacancies in bishoprics at a time, and that any more hoping to retire would have to hold on to their mitres, with 16 out of the 43 diocesan bishops (38 per cent) eligible to retire on a full pension around the time of the Lambeth Conference, does

he anticipate a backlog of disgruntled bishops (and perhaps more importantly, bishops' wives!) who will be hindered in their final pilgrimage – to their retirement home?

The Archbishop of York: The answer to the question is No. Dates of meetings of the Crown Nominations Commission have been planned around anticipated retirements over the next few years. Being neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, I can neither speculate nor anticipate the backlog of disgruntled bishops or bishops' wives nearing retirement. Bishops, by the grand permission as the servants of God, are gifted with patience and adept at finding green pastures for their people and themselves. Time and eternity is no question.

Mr Paul Eddy (Winchester): I am glad to hear that Your Grace is now willing to add to his job description a ministry to disgruntled bishops' wives. Can I just add that should bishops decide *en bloc*, or in increasing numbers, to retire, could the number of people on the Crown Nominations Committee be increased so that different panels of them could deal with different appointments and that dioceses will not have to wait an extraordinary length of time for a new bishop?

The Archbishop of York: I am quite assured that His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury and myself as Chair and Vice-Chair of that commission, with the assistance at the moment of Caroline Boddington as Secretary, and William Chapman, will expedite the business when you elect the new Crown Nominations Commission. As I said, time and eternity are not in conflict.

Church Commissioners

2. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Church Commissioners:

What is the current valuation of the Church Commissioners' assets?

Mr Andreas Whittam Smith (First Church Estates Commissioner): Valuations of all the Commissioners' assets are undertaken once a year and at the end of 2006 our assets were valued at £5.36 billion.

I thought I would give some comparisons. That is a bit more than either Cambridge or Oxford; it is a lot less than the Wellcome Trust, which is £13.4 billion, and it is less than those famous Ivy League universities, Yale and Harvard.

The Chairman: Questions 3 and 4 are in fact identical. This is not an error. Question 3 is from Ven. Alistair Magowan and Question 4 from Miss Prudence Dailey.

3. *The Archdeacon of Dorset (Ven. Alistair Magowan)* asked the Church Commissioners:

How much additional income per annum can now be made available following this year's actuarial revaluation of the Church Commissioners' assets?

4. *Miss Prudence Dailey (Oxford)* asked the Church Commissioners:

How much additional income per annum can now be made available following this year's actuarial revaluation of the Church Commissioners' assets?

Mr Andreas Whittam Smith: With permission I will answer Archdeacon Magowan and Miss Dailey together. On current assumptions the Commissioners' planned non-pensions distributions in the 2008–2010 triennium will be £243.8 million. This is £4.5million (in total) above the level expected following the previous triennial review and represents an increase which is somewhat ahead of where we think earnings will move. This is after reducing distributions in this period to catch up from expenditure, which went over that in the last period, and it also takes into account the increased longevity of our pensioners.

This improvement is mostly due to the Commissioners' good investment performance. Had we performed in line with the industry average over the past ten years, 46 per cent of the fund would be needed for pensions rather than 33 per cent and annual non-pensions distributions would be over £40 million below the planned levels.

Pensions Board

*5. *Mr Paul Eddy (Winchester)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

In how many cases, by diocese, do gay partners of clergy who have entered into civil partnerships enjoy pension rights under the clergy pension schemes; and have all single clergy been advised as to the new financial benefits that same-sex partners can receive if they have entered into civil partnerships?

Mr Allan Bridgewater replied: Clergy are not required to notify the Board that they have entered into a civil partnership but to date 11 have done so. Statistics by diocese would be immaterial on such a small number and we cannot assume that all such cases relate to gay partners. The Board has not contacted all single clergy to advise them specifically of the financial benefits that same-sex partners can receive if they have entered into civil partnerships but this information is provided on request. However, an updated version of the Board's booklet *Your questions answered* was recently sent to all clergy. This includes reference to the benefits available to civil partners.

6. *Dr Julian Litten (Chelmsford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

If the spouse of a deceased priest is entitled to a pension based on the priest's entire service, even if they marry only when the priest has retired, why is it that the pension for the surviving partner of a civil partnership is based only on service from the date of the

Civil Partnership Act when the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 say that all people should be treated equally in the matter of pensions?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: As I have advised in response to Questions on earlier occasions on this issue, all pension schemes are required by the Civil Partnership Act 2004, and regulations made under that Act, to provide benefits for a civil partner on the same basis as for widows and widowers, in respect of service from 5 December 2005. The scheme has been amended to comply with these legislative requirements.

Dr Julian Litten (Chelmsford): Rather than amending the scheme to comply with the legislative requirement, why does the Pensions Board decline to exercise their prerogative to be more generous?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: It is not within the gift of the Pensions Board to be generous when the pension fund is in deficit. It is a matter for those who represent the employers in the form of DRACSC to consider whether they wish to go beyond what is required by the rule.

7. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

What equivalent contribution (expressed as a percentage of stipend) could the Church make to defined contribution pension schemes selected by individual members of the clergy who wish to opt out of the main Church of England defined benefit pension scheme?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: All things being equal, contributions into a defined benefit scheme and a self-selected money purchase or defined contribution scheme are likely to produce similar results in terms of final benefits on retirement. What is different about a defined contribution scheme is that the risk lies entirely with the scheme member who cannot be certain what pension they will receive until they actually retire. I would remind Synod that a switch to a defined contribution scheme was one of the three options identified in the second report of the Pensions Task Group published in June 2006. In the consultation exercise that followed only one diocese supported that option.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): Thank you for that answer. It is very interesting to hear about the final results of pension schemes, where the risk is and indeed about the results of the survey, but, with respect, none of those answers was an answer to the Question that I have asked. I wonder whether it would be possible to answer the original Question, which is a straightforward mathematical calculation?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: Again, it is not a matter for the Pensions Board to determine what contribution would be made by the diocese concerned, should the member opt out of the scheme of which they are automatically a member from the point of ordination.

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): Is it not true that only those ordained to stipendiary ministry are automatically members of the pension scheme? Is it not true that anybody is legally entitled not to be a member of a pensions scheme if they do not wish to be?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: I think the answer to the first part was Yes; and I think the answer to the second and third parts was No, but it might also have been Yes, so let me continue. (*Laughter*)

Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford): Madam Chair, I wonder if I may ask another supplementary?

The Chairman: No. May I suggest that as you feel that that question was incorrectly answered, you take it up privately? We can perhaps arrange for another written answer to be provided for you.

8. *Revd Moira Astin (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

Has the Pensions Board sought financial guarantees of any kind from the Church Commissioners in respect of the post-1998 pension scheme as an alternative to reducing the value of the benefits to scheme members?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: The Board intends to discuss with the Commissioners whether in the longer term there are responsible ways in which they should provide some greater assurance to the pensions fund, but there is no easy, quick fix. The Church Commissioners do not have the legal power to offer such guarantees, and they are already due to spend out about one-third of their capital to meet their pre-1998 commitments. Before the Synod and Parliament could be persuaded to agree the necessary primary legislation to put the Commissioners' capital at further risk, the Church would have to decide whether it wanted to reverse the clear decision reached in the 1990s that the new pensions fund should operate without further erosion of the Commissioners' historic endowment. This does not offer an alternative to changing the benefits before the Board is required to set a new contribution rate by 31 March next year.

Revd Moira Astin (Oxford): (I have not yet moved to Southwell: I am still in Oxford diocese.) Thank you for that. I think in helping Synod decide some of those policy issues it would be helpful to know the answer to this Question. In terms of the current value of the pension fund, what quantum of contingent guaranteed assets – I am told that is what I need to say – would be required from the Church Commissioners to meet the whole deficit of the post-1998 pension fund?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: As the basis of the last valuation published, which was the end of 2003, the deficit was £91 million. The figure likely to be declared as a consequence of the current valuation that is under way will exceed that sum and could probably be as much as £140 million, depending on the judgements taken about assumptions and the financial information available, based at the time of the valuation.

The Archdeacon of Berkshire (Ven. Norman Russell): Am I right in understanding the Chairman of the Pensions Board to have indicated that the Board has not as yet asked the Church Commissioners about the contingent guarantees?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: You are correct in that assumption.

9. *Revd Canon John Ashe (Guildford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

Following the Question put to the Pensions Task Group in July 2006 asking whether any research had been done on the adequacy or otherwise of the present pension benefits, to which the answer was negative, has the Pensions Board or the Archbishops' Council yet conducted any such research?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: The issue of clergy pensions was examined in some detail in the *Generosity and Sacrifice* report published in 2001. The Pensions Board has not conducted any further research of its own on adequacy levels but I would remind Synod of the information in Shaun Farrell's presentation in February. This showed that in 2005 clergy on a full Church and State pension were placed in the top 20 per cent of retirement incomes in the UK.

Revd Canon John Ashe (Guildford): As your answer compared the situation of clergy with the rest of the population, could you tell us what proportion of that top 20 per cent of recipients of pension is for people who, like the clergy, have to enter the housing market for the first time at retirement?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: I could not truthfully answer that question but I will ensure that you are provided with an answer to it.

Mr Philip Lovegrove (St Albans): Has any further survey been undertaken as to how many full-time clergy already have retirement houses and have been prudent enough to start having those possibilities going forward?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: No, but we are in the process of conducting further inquiry amongst the clergy as to their anticipation with regard to the CHARM scheme and whether or not they are looking to find some support from the Church on the matter of housing.

10. The Archdeacon of Dorset (*Ven. Alistair Magowan*) asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

What is the annual estimated global cost per annum to the Church of England of remedying the deficit in the post-1998 pension fund?

11. *Revd Canon John Ashe (Guildford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

What is the current quantum of the actuarial deficit in the post-1998 pension fund?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: I would like to take this Question and Canon Ashe's Question together. The precise deficit in the post-1998 pension fund as at the current valuation date – 31 December 2006 – will not be known until the Board has completed the valuation process in the autumn. However, our actuaries, as I mentioned a moment ago, have indicated that it is unlikely to be less than £140 million. If the Board is minded to agree that the deficit should be recovered over a 15-year period and the Pensions Regulator does not object, the annual deficit contributions would need to be around 5 per cent of pensionable stipends in each year. On this basis the annual starting figure in 2008 would be around £8.2 million.

The Archdeacon of Dorset (Ven. Alistair McGowan): From a number of the Questions you have answered you have said that the gap was thought to be just under £100 million and now it is looking more like £140 million. Can you explain that in the light of the fact that in the wider pension world, certainly from things read in the press, the gap or the black hole there has gone from £100 million to £3 billion?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: The principal reason for the change has been the redaction in the assumption about investment returns, including yields on index-linked bills, which are the starting point for actuarial valuations.

Revd Canon John Ashe (Guildford): Your maths is probably better than mine: I think if we did the sums in our head from an earlier answer we might know this. Could you tell us what proportion of the Church Commissioners' assets the figure of £140 million equates to?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: I could not, which does not necessarily mean that my ability at maths is less or better than yours! I do not have the Commissioners' figures immediately to hand, but I will ensure you receive an answer to that question.

Revd Canon John Ashe (Guildford): It was £5.36 billion.

Mr Philip Lovegrove (St Albans): Would you be kind enough to set out for Synod the assumptions under which the actuaries are working to produce this £140 million suspected deficit at the end of 2006, bearing in mind that not only is the fund substantially in equity but also that the gilt-based investment returns have transformed recently from the fact that interest rates are rising considerably? We do need to see the assumptions on which . . .

The Chairman: You are verging on a speech.

Mr Allan Bridgewater: I will avoid verging on a speech in trying to answer Mr Lovegrove's question. The £140 million, which is a give or take figure on a preliminary basis from the actuaries, uses the updated financial data as at December 2006 compared

to those which prevailed at December 2003. It makes no recognition of any proposals coming to this Synod which may or may not be approved – but hopefully they will – nor does it test the Board with regard to the assumptions that the Board has to make, and account to the Regulator for making, in the light of such things as mortality and the updated experience on mortality.

Revd Stephen Trott (Peterborough): If members of the scheme were to attempt to compensate by way of additional voluntary contributions for the reduced value of the pension in the proposed scheme, how much a month would it cost us to compensate for that prospective loss in value of our pensions?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: I am very happy to supply Fr Trott with an answer to his question but I cannot give it this evening.

12. *Revd Robert Cotton (Guildford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

Has a calculation been made of the projected increase (in pounds sterling) in the contribution for clergy pensions for 2008 as compared with 2007 if no changes were to be made to the existing pensions arrangements and, if it has, how much is that increase?

13. *Revd Robert Cotton (Guildford)* asked the Chairman of the Pensions Board:

Has a calculation been made of the projected increase (in pounds sterling) in the contribution for clergy pensions for 2008 as compared with 2007 if the only change in the existing pension arrangements were to increase the number of years' service required for a full pension from 37 to 40 and, if it has, how much is that increase?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: I would like to answer Questions 12 and 13 together.

As the Board will not have completed the actuarial valuation of the scheme until the autumn, it is not possible to give precise answers at this point. However, on the basis of the advice received to date, the contribution rate for 2008 on the basis of current benefits would need to be *not less than* 43 per cent and almost certainly several percentage points higher, depending on the final judgements the Board have yet to make on certain key assumptions, which I referred to a moment ago. In cash terms this is likely to mean a contribution in the range £8,500 to £9,500 per person based on next year's national minimum stipend of £19,640.

Revd Robert Cotton (Guildford): During the consultations were the dioceses asked only how hard it would be to find new funds to match this increase or were the dioceses asked whether this increase could be funded by prioritizing pensions above other lines within current budgets?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: To my knowledge, such a question was not posed in those terms

but as a consequence of the consultation process the general feedback was that at around 40 per cent we were hitting the affordability barrier.

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): Robert asked two Questions: one was about unchanged pension arrangements and the other was about only increasing the age but not the other factors, but you only gave one answer. I appreciate that it is difficult to give a precise answer but could you give an answer to the second Question, which is: roughly speaking, what would it cost?

Mr Allan Bridgewater: I thought I had answered both points. Which part did I not answer?

Revd Dr John Hartley (Bradford): For the first one you said not less than 43 per cent, probably higher, and you said £8,500 to £9,500, but you did not answer the second one.

Mr Allan Bridgewater: No, but that 43 per cent is a composite rate. We do not have the precise figures available at the present time. I would like to say to Synod that if nothing changes we are looking at a minimum of 43 per cent. That is before the assumptions with regard to material changes have been considered by the Board, which are likely, in my opinion – and I believe the Board was minded at its preliminary sessions to believe it could be – to be a few percentage points higher. That is why I quoted the 43 per cent as a minimum and I quoted a range of money, as I was asked, which actually reflects the range between 43 per cent and 48 per cent.

Archbishops' Council

14. *Revd Canon Ian Gaskell (Wakefield)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Do guidelines on the use of grants from the Parish Mission Fund advise dioceses to take care in creating central posts and conduits to such posts which they may not be able to sustain financially in the future?

Dr Philip Giddings: Guidelines for the Parish Mission Fund are summarized in GS Misc 859. Whilst there are no specific guidelines on the creation of central posts, dioceses are encouraged to consider what alternative funding plans or 'exit strategies' might be devised, in view of the short-term nature of this funding, and whether there is potential to gain matching funding for projects.

15. *Revd Canon Ian Gaskell (Wakefield)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

In view of the significance of grants from the Parish Mission Fund for our parishes, can the Council provide information about the amount and purpose of grants from the fund to Wakefield diocese since the establishment of the fund to the present date, including

the percentage of Wakefield diocese's allocation directly received by parishes in the diocese?

Dr Philip Giddings: Detailed information about the amount and purpose of Parish Mission Fund grants in Wakefield diocese has been placed on the notice board. According to certificates returned to the Archbishops' Council by the Wakefield diocesan board of finance parishes have received 33 per cent of the diocese's total allocation since the establishment of the fund in 2002, with 5 per cent put towards diocesan initiatives and 62 per cent carried forward for use in future years.

16. *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

What response has the Archbishops' Council made to the Charity Commission consultation on draft Public Benefit guidance; and does the Council have any plans to produce guidance for PCCs that will be required to register with the Charity Commission when the relevant parts of the Charities Act 2006 come into force?

Dr Philip Giddings: The Council has submitted a response, a copy of which has been posted on the notice board and is already available on the Church of England website under the heading 'Papers'. The Council will be providing guidance for those PCCs with incomes of over £100,000 which will need to register when the relevant provisions come into force (currently expected to be in 2008). That guidance will cover both the process of registration and the implications of being a registered charity.

17. *Mr Colin Slater (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

The *Church Times* recently devoted a series of articles to giving to the Church. In one article it was asserted that according to an estimate based on Inland Revenue statistics 'diocesan giving runs at a national average of three per cent of disposable income'. This is below the Church of England's policy, first recommended nearly 30 years ago, encouraging a target of 5 per cent of disposable income after tax to be given to the Church. This amounts to a massive shortfall in income, so what steps is the Archbishops' Council planning to challenge the Church about the serious failure to meet this target?

Mr Michael Chamberlain: Whilst the average level of giving is indeed just over 3 per cent of disposable income, this covers a wide variation in individual giving. Given that many members are still giving at very low levels, there are clearly also many who are giving generously.

To further stimulate giving, the National Stewardship Committee is developing a range of 'good practice' resources for parishes to be able to promote giving effectively: some of these are already starting to be adopted by dioceses and parishes. However, encouraging

giving requires leadership and in due course we will seek to bring recommendations before this Synod on policy and action to encourage giving more effectively.

Mr Colin Slater (Southwell and Nottingham): Mr Chamberlain has just said that to encourage higher levels of giving requires leadership. By that, does he have in mind the leadership of parish clergy together with their bishops and archdeacons and, if so, is he aware that there is plenty of anecdotal evidence from the network of stewardship advisers of the reluctance of many parish clergy to preach and teach on the subject of giving?

Mr Chamberlain: I think it does behove the clergy to take part in encouraging giving in line with biblical teaching. I hope that the resources and teaching support which is going to be provided will enable them to do this task.

18. *Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

What is the percentage increase in giving necessary simply to replace the impact of the reduction in the basic rate of income tax (from 22 per cent to 20 per cent) announced in the last Budget, and what is the calculation of the overall reduction in the Church's income as a result of this development (on a full year basis) if compensating increases in giving are not made by parishioners?

Mr Michael Chamberlain: We estimate that the full-year reduction in Gift Aid for parishes across the Church is £7.9 million (a loss of over 10 per cent in tax reclaimed). If an individual giving by Gift Aid wished to mitigate the impact of the reduction in the basic rate of income tax on their own gift they would need to increase their gift by 3.2 per cent. In aggregate the Church will need to grow voluntary income by 1.9 per cent to compensate for the reduction in Gift Aid. Given that inflation will have an impact on top of this, parishes will need to work very hard on increasing their giving, just to stand still in real terms. It is plainly obvious that this change will have a very considerable and serious adverse impact on the financial position of parishes, dioceses, cathedrals and all other Church charities.

Mr Gavin Oldham (Oxford): This is a strikingly worrying figure, particularly as the abolition of the 10 per cent starting rate means that many people will not have the tax reduction in their pocket. It seems to me that that issue needs the oxygen of publicity very badly. I wonder whether you would consider writing to the chairmen of all diocesan boards of finance asking them to raise the matter urgently at autumn diocesan synods and ask parishes to increment their normal fund-raising by this 3.2 per cent or 1.9 per cent and to do their best to increase the return on their parish investments.

Mr Michael Chamberlain: Certainly, and that is something that I believe that the Finance Committee should take on board. I would add that in June the Treasury launched the consultation on increasing the effectiveness of the Gift Aid programme. The Council's response will suggest ways which would both simplify the administration

of Gift Aid and also release the revenue to the Church; it will encourage parishes and others to respond to this consultation, but we will certainly take on board the comments which Mr Oldham has made.

Mr Robin Stevens (Chelmsford): Is Mr Chamberlain aware that because of the abolition of the 10 per cent tax rate you need to earn £18,000 a year and give 5 per cent of take-home pay before the tax reduction is sufficient for you to give that tax reduction to make up the fall in Gift Aid? If your income is less than £18,000 a year, you do not get enough tax benefit to make up the fall in Gift Aid, so it falls on those who are £18,000 or more better off to pick up this shortfall in Gift Aid.

Mr Michael Chamberlain: I am sure we can take on board those calculations in moving the matter forward.

19. *Dr John Bull (Newcastle)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

How many dioceses are including their parsonage houses as assets in their balance sheets and what are the implications for these parsonage houses if a diocese goes bankrupt?

Mr Michael Chamberlain: In the most recent accounts available 37 dioceses included their parsonage houses on their balance sheets.

Parsonage houses are vested in the benefice. Regardless of whether parsonage houses were included in a diocese's balance sheet, if the diocese were to go bankrupt the proceeds of parsonage houses would be available to creditors only if they were sold after the usual consents to a sale under the Parsonages Measure and to the transfer of the sale proceeds to the diocesan pastoral account or diocesan stipends fund capital account were obtained.

Dr John Bull (Newcastle): Should therefore parsonage houses be included on the balance sheet?

Mr Michael Chamberlain: The answer to that is Yes, under the accounting standard FRSS5, because the DBF carries both obligations and reversionary benefits of ownership. There is usually no distinction between the various categories of housing for the large insurance, repair and maintenance element, which appears under the ministry heading in the majority of diocesan financial accounts, and accountability and stewardship go hand in hand.

Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn): Is it not the case that parsonages are contingent assets of the diocese and that it is not considered prudent practice to list contingent assets as assets of any company?

Mr Michael Chamberlain: I do not have the accounting standards before me but I do

not actually believe that they are contingent assets of the diocese, and therefore no note would be appropriate.

20. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

As many parishes are finding it increasingly difficult to pay their parish share in full, what strategies are being planned to cut costs at diocesan, deanery and parish level (e.g. cutting out mailings for diocesan synods)?

Mr Michael Chamberlain: This is a matter for dioceses, deaneries and parishes to determine for themselves. However, the National Church Institutions, together with the consultative group of DBF chairs and secretaries, have established an administrative costs working group to advise on best practice in this area, particularly regarding collaborative working, effective procurement and the use of e-mail.

21. *The Archdeacon of Malmesbury (Ven. Alan Hawker)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Standing Orders rightly make provision for the making of a report on any business that has financial implications. It has been normal practice to itemize staff time needed and give this a monetary value, but staff will be paid their salary even if the item under discussion does not proceed. So can a practice be adopted of advising what other business would have to be deferred or not carried out in order that the proposed new business can be properly serviced?

Mr Michael Chamberlain: We will consider if this can be done in some cases. However, it is not always possible to be specific about which work would need to be dropped or deferred in order to carry out proposed new business, or indeed whether additional staff resources are required, not least as there will often be more than one option. I consider this decision can be made most effectively just before the new task is about to begin, in the light of up-to-date priorities. It would also be impracticable to adopt the suggested practice for any amendments to motions given the timescales involved.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Is it not invidious to suggest which of these pieces of work might be put on hold as that may influence the way in which people choose to decide on a particular motion, given that financial advice?

Mr Michael Chamberlain: I take that point. I have to admit that this whole question of financial management is something I have struggled with for the past eight years or so. Every time I see the financial memorandum, I wonder if we have it absolutely right.

22. *Ms Susan Cooper (London)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Given the growing support for the Early Day Motion (1664) on the Consecration of Women to the Episcopate recently tabled and the questions asked in the House of

Commons on 25 June 2007 to the Second Church Estates Commissioner, has the Legislative Drafting Group on Women Bishops given consideration to the probability that Parliament is unlikely to accept legislation for women bishops that contains discrimination?

Canon Dr Christina Baxter: The primary responsibility of this Synod is to seek God's will for the Church of England and not to allow ourselves to be too distracted by what others who do not necessarily share our theological convictions may or may not think. The Synod has already said that it wants to try and keep within the Church of England those who, on grounds of belief, would be conscientiously unable to receive the ministry of women bishops. Logically that suggests that ending all arrangements that some might describe as discrimination is going to be difficult, but these are all matters we shall have to return to once we have the legislative drafting group's report.

Ms Susan Cooper (London): Have the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council considered that God might also speak through MPs and peers?

Canon Dr Christina Baxter: I have not spoken to the Presidents about that matter but I would be very surprised if both Archbishops have not done that as an essay in their primary training for ordination.

23. *Canon Dr Susan Atkin (Chelmsford)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

What progress has the Women Bishops Legislative Drafting Group made in its deliberations and what is the current timetable for report to the House of Bishops?

Canon Dr Christina Baxter: I understand that the Group has met on six occasions and believes that it is making good progress. I am sure that it will wish to report to the House of Bishops as soon as it is in a position to do so. I do not know what its present estimate is of when it might be able to publish its report. I think it knows well enough that many of us are keen to know what it is going to say but that we are even keener that it should do its job well.

24. *Mr Simon Butterworth (Manchester)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

What contact has there been with Sony and 'Insomnia Games' both before and after the release of the game *Resistance: Fall of Man*, and what procedures are being put in place to ensure images of churches and cathedrals will not be used without permission again?

Mrs Anne Sloman: Sony made no contact with the Cathedral before the game *Resistance: Fall of Man* was released. Where permission is granted for filming or television recording in churches steps can be taken to restrict the use of images to those befitting a place of worship. In this case the pictures were obtained without permission.

The Archbishops' Council's Legal Office is considering what guidance it might provide to safeguard against this happening in future. In the meantime consultation with diocesan registrars would be a prudent first step before churches or cathedrals grant permission to film.

If I may inform Synod of the latest position, today I understand that Sony has unreservedly apologized for using the cathedral in the game and has acknowledged that they did not seek permission to use the Cathedral's interior: they have undertaken not to use the Cathedral in future. However, they assert that there is no legal requirement for them to seek such permission. Sony has refused either to withdraw the game or to make a donation to community groups nominated by the cathedral. Sony has also refused to sign up to the guidelines proposed by the Cathedral calling for undertakings over permission to use sacred spaces and support for those resisting the culture of gun crime in their communities. A full copy of Manchester's statement has been placed on the Central Hall notice board.

Revd Dr Richard Burridge (London University): Would you therefore ask the Ethical Investment Advisory Group to consider whether the Church has any investments in Sony in the light of that statement?

Mrs Anne Sloman: That is not a matter for me but I am happy to pass on your comments, which I am sure those members of the committee have noted.

Canon Dr Christina Baxter (Southwell and Nottingham): Given the widespread concern that Church members have about this particular game, would it be appropriate for some central authority, maybe the Archbishops' Council, to consider advising Christians not to buy Sony products until Sony withdraw this, apologize and give money in the wake of that request to show that they really are penitent about what they have done?

Mrs Anne Sloman: I am sure there are many prominent members of the Archbishops' Council here who will be in a position to raise that at our next meeting, should they choose to do so.

25. *Revd Canon Peter Spiers (Liverpool)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

Given that their last survey was conducted in 2002, is it not time for the Archbishops' Council to commission another survey with a view to ending their discrimination against Mac users and ensuring that Church House Publishing makes *Visual Liturgy* compatible with our operating system?

Mr Philip Fletcher: There has not been discrimination against Mac users: the difficulty is the result of a market-led investment in the Microsoft Windows platform. This decision, which was made some years ago, still stands up to scrutiny on technological and

economic grounds. Mac users are a small percentage of a small customer base and it would be impossible to recoup the costs associated with cross-platform development. Having said that, there are a number of Mac users who do run *Visual Liturgy Live* successfully using a Windows emulator. CHP staff – not me – would be happy to advise Pete Spiers on this.

CHP believes that its resources are better spent investing in the next generation of liturgy and worship planning tools, which are expected to be accessible *via* web browsers and as such would be ‘open’ and platform-independent.

Revd Canon Pete Spiers (Liverpool): Given the fact that in the last five years more and more people are using Macs and switching from PCs, and finding the experience spiritually enriching, can the Archbishops’ Council assure members of this Synod that as a matter of urgency the next generation of liturgy and worship running tools will be acceptable to Mac users so that the rights of allegedly minority groups can be safeguarded?

Mr Philip Fletcher: Spiritual enrichment for all and open sourcing platform independence is the way to go and it should keep Mac users, and, come to that, Windows users, happy – we hope.

Ms Dana Delap (Durham): Given the almost universal use of PCs, whether using Windows or those of us who use the more holy Mac, I wonder if the Archbishops’ Council would consider some kind of survey on what other resources might be provided by the new media part of Church House Publishing that would engage not only liturgically but also in the management and planning of churches and church structures?

Mr Philip Fletcher: CHP has been incurring a loss through the experience of Visual Liturgy Live and is very conscious as an organization about the growing importance of e-publishing. The point you are making is very much in their minds and if Synod members have specific suggestions, then I do suggest they tell me, or Peter Crumpler sitting up there in the gallery, about their particular ideas.

26. *Mr Peter Smith (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops’ Council:

Has the Archbishops’ Council proposals to review the workings of the Cathedrals Measure 1999 as to elections to cathedral councils and chapters now that most cathedrals have had experience of three cycles of elections?

The Archbishop of York: The 1999 Measure is a relatively recent piece of legislation, produced following a thorough examination of the issues by the Archbishops’ Commission on Cathedrals, chaired by Lady Howe. In the absence of evidence to suggest that the Measure is already in need of amendment – and no significant issues

have been brought to our attention by those most closely involved in applying it – the Council sees no reason to embark on a further process of review at this stage.

27. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Presidents of the Archbishops' Council:

What support, if any, does the Church of England give to any of its lay members who feel unable as a matter of conscience to accept the constraints that the Sexual Orientation Regulations place on them as they seek to earn a living?

The Archbishop of York: Whenever the Government has proposed legislation that could raise issues of conscience for the Church or for individual Christians the Archbishops' Council has sought – usually with some success – to argue for the wisdom of not forcing people into a position where they have to choose between obeying the law and their consciences. We have reminded ministers and officials that the right to manifest religious belief is protected under the European Convention on Human Rights. Where, however, competing rights come into conflict, as they did with these regulations, the outcome is bound not to satisfy everyone. It has to be for individual Christians prayerfully to decide how best to stay the right side of the law without acting contrary to their convictions.

Revd Canon Professor Marilyn McCord Adams (Oxford University): I wonder what support, if any, the Church of England offers to gay and lesbian couples in their efforts to be faithful to one another in Christ.

The Chairman: I am ruling that out of order: I do not think it is relevant to what was being said.

House of Bishops

28. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

In answer to my Question at the February Group of Sessions the Archbishop of Canterbury as Chairman of the House of Bishops said that he would make it a priority to raise with the House how it might advocate and defend, both to Government and Parliament and to society at large, the freedom of people of faith (both as individuals and collectively) to live and work in accordance with the principles and convictions of their faith. Has the House had the opportunity to discuss that issue and, if so, what has been the outcome of such discussion?

The Archbishop of York: In May the Bishops' Meeting spent some time discussing the range of issues that arise from the desire of the Government for the Church and other faith groups to get more involved in the delivery of welfare services to the public. There is no simple, pat answer to the age-old dilemma of the proper boundaries between law and conscience, so the House will have to return to it each time we are confronted by legislative proposals which raise serious ethical issues, as for example with the Human Tissue and Embryo Bill.

Mr Clive Scowen (London): In view of the increasing influence of secularism in our public life, would it not be timely for the House of Bishops now to go on the offensive in making the case for the contribution which people of faith can make to the life of the nation only if they are free to live and act in accordance with the convictions of their faith, rather than the House simply reacting to events?

The Archbishop of York: I would like on behalf of the House to say that we do not want to go on the offensive: we would just like to have some kind of a robust response and engagement. In the House of Lords recently three bishops contributed to a debate on those people without faith being given space, and I thought we made a good case why faith matters to the nation.

29. *Revd Stephen Coles (London)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

During the debates on human sexuality at the February Group of Sessions bishops expressed commitment to listening and dialogue and recognized that they needed to put greater energy into this process. What has the House done to put these two laudable intentions into effect since then?

The Archbishop of York: The House of Bishops remains committed to the listening process called for in 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolution 1.10 but it is for individual bishops to take this forward in their dioceses: I am confident that they have been playing their part in facilitating this process.

Revd Stephen Coles (London): What process does the House of Bishops have to monitor whether the Archbishops' confidence is justified?

The Archbishop of York: All I can say is that last year the actual listening process in the Anglican Communion office indicated that a great deal was in fact going on across the Church of England, and in the last three years there has been a move from debate about sexuality to processes of listening to people and their experiences: these have happened in dioceses, deaneries and parishes. There has often been little publicity around such encounters as attempts are made to create safe places for all Christians to be heard. Dioceses have reported these approaches and responses.

30. *Mr Gerry O'Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Now that the provinces of Rwanda, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda and the Southern Cone have made provision for the episcopal oversight of their expatriates in North America, will the House of Bishops give consideration to making similar provision for expatriates from the provinces of Canterbury and York?

31. *Mr Gerry O'Brien (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Noting that The Episcopal Church (TEC) has established a jurisdiction in a diocese

deemed for some purposes to be within the Province of Canterbury, will the House of Bishops consider the case for a reciprocal arrangement?

The Archbishop of York: With permission, I should like to answer both Mr O'Brien's questions together.

The House has not considered such provision, nor has it plans to consider a reciprocal arrangement concerning the Diocese in Europe and the Episcopal Church. The history and make-up of the Diocese in Europe in relation to the Convocation of American Churches in Europe bears no comparison with that of the Episcopal Church in the USA.

The fact of the matter is that the provinces which have made such provision for episcopal oversight in North America have done so without the official sanction of the Instruments of the Anglican Communion.

Mr Gerry O'Brien (Rochester): I thank His Grace for that courteous and predictable answer, but, with the greatest respect, may I suggest to him that in the light of the rapidly evolving situation in North America his answer could well have been given by King Canute?

The Chairman: I think that was uncalled for, Mr O'Brien and I hope we will have no more of that during Question time.

32. *Mr John Ward (London)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Has the House considered the role of bishops in the House of Lords and if so to what conclusion has it come?

The Bishop of Southwark (Rt Revd Tom Butler): The House has maintained an active interest in this matter in the context of the continuing contribution made by bishops in the Second Chamber. When it last formally considered the matter it strongly supported the bishops' continued presence there, believing – in the words of the Church's response to the Wakeham Commission – that 'a Christian perspective is an important feature of debates that concern the common good and public life' [GS 1385, Annex B]. I refer you to that document for a fuller rationale of the House's position.

Mr John Ward (London): Would the House give consideration to whether there should be a general policy adopted whereby bishops should reflect back to the House of Lords the nature and substance of relevant Synod debates, whether or not they agree with the outcome of those debates?

The Bishop of Southwark: The House has not given attention to that particular question, although every time the House meets there is a meeting of the House of Bishops in the House of Lords as part of that meeting. I will make sure that that question is addressed to that meeting.

Revd Prebendary David Houlding (London): Would the Bishop like to remind Synod that we did in fact visit this question as a Synod in the last quinquennium by way of a Private Member's Motion in my name back in the year 2001, I think, when this Synod both endorsed the principle of bishops in Parliament in a second chamber, however they may find themselves present, and that at the same time a sufficient number should be there in order to cover a full range of debates and interests? Synod may remember the famous line of the Bishop of London when he referred to port-swilling prelates, which, of course, is not an accurate description of the present House!

The Bishop of Southwark: That was indeed the case and the outcome of that debate was very similar to the submission we made to the Wakeham Commission.

33. *Dr Peter Harland (Ely)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Has the House of Bishops issued guidelines on Sunday trading to Church of England organizations in the light of SPCK's decision to open on Sundays?

The Bishop of Southwark: No, but the Church of England's position on the principle has already been articulated by the Mission and Public Affairs Council, which (in April 2006) reaffirmed the view that Sunday's special character should be safeguarded.

I, nevertheless, understand that the decision to open SPCK bookshops on Sundays was made by the St Stephen the Great Charitable Trust (an Orthodox charity), which recently acquired the bookshops from SPCK.

34. *Mr John Ashwin (Chichester)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

What lessons for the Church of England have been learnt as a result of the well publicised recent cases of child abuse involving ministers and other Church workers, stipendiary, paid and voluntary, which are widely agreed to have been damaging to the Church's honour and reputation?

35. *Revd Brunel James (Ripon and Leeds)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

What steps is the House of Bishops taking to take to ensure that all information the Church holds relating to allegations of sexual abuse, however old, is shared with the police, in line with the request of David Pearson (Chief Executive of the Church Child Protection Advice Service)?

The Bishop of Hereford (Rt Revd Anthony Priddis): With permission, I should like to answer Mr Ashwin's Question together with that from the Revd Brunel James.

First, may I say how much we all deeply regret that these cases of child abuse ever happened, and how terrible they have been, and continue to be, for the victims? Concern and care for the victims involved in these cases must be paramount in any

response. We must all learn the lessons from these tragic cases, which underline the continuing importance of taking child protection seriously, and working for the ‘informed vigilance’ called for in our national policy, *Protecting all God’s Children*.

To this end the House of Bishops has asked the Church’s central safeguarding liaison group to present firm proposals on the best way forward for a review of past cases within dioceses and we are already under way with this. These guidelines will offer a model child protection protocol to dioceses and others for the review of any cases of past allegations. The group is consulting appropriate specialist agencies outside the Church of England in order to benefit from their good practice and experience in this area.

The recent House of Bishops’ meeting recommitted itself to ensuring that our current policy and procedures are followed at all levels within the Church, to help build a culture of informed vigilance to safeguard our children and young people.

Mr John Ashwin (Chichester): Thank you for that very helpful and sensitive answer, but the initial response given by the Church’s spokesperson was widely thought to be weak and inappropriate. Can the Bishop assure us that those who are spokespeople for the Church will have training to help them respond to media questions, particularly on this very difficult issue, appropriately and effectively?

The Bishop of Hereford: Yes indeed I can. It was, as you say, unfortunate, but perhaps I could explain that part of what was unfortunate was that the *Today* programme, as I understand it, changed the terms of reference of the questions which they had originally said they were going to ask. It was therefore not within our national officer’s briefing to speak about the specifics which she was then asked about, because she had understood, and I think our communications office had understood, that the questions were going to be forward looking.

Revd Brunel James (Ripon and Leeds): Thank you for the Bishop’s helpful and considered reply. I want to ask this question: seeing that the cases we are concerned about here date back before probably the present bench of bishops came into existence, would the process envisaged perhaps involve questioning now retired senior clergy who might have presided over a degree of cover-up, perhaps, in the past?

The Bishop of Hereford: I hope that they did not preside over a degree of cover-up, but certainly we are looking at that within the safeguarding group. We have had a meeting of the safeguarding group since the House of Bishops meeting. As you know, we finish here on Tuesday; on Thursday of next week I am chairing the sub-group that we have set up to look at these, and I will be able to tell you more in the future. It would be our intention not only to follow paper records, if I can put it like that, but also to approach people who are no longer in post and some of whom will have retired.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): Despite very good briefing in a recent case, the reporting

by *Radio Bristol* in particular was scurrilous and misinformation personified. What can be done to prevent this from happening in the future and to respond when those situations arise?

The Chairman: I have confirmed that we are getting into an area of imputation. I am worried about these questions that are coming.

Mr Tim Hind (Bath and Wells): The original Question was about the Church's honour and reputation.

The Chairman: There was imputation about a meeting outside this body, and I am not prepared to take that question. I would rather you did not answer it. I hope that you will be careful with your words.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I will try to be very careful. Does the quality of historical record-keeping by bishops make the suggestion of Revd Brunel James and Mr Pearson feasible?

The Bishop of Hereford: I would like to hear a bit more about the question. If you are asking about following up people who have retired, then I think that is possible whatever their record, is it not?

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): I was rather referring to the quality of records that may have been kept historically, from which it may be very difficult to discern the nature of allegations made in the past.

The Bishop of Hereford: I think you are absolutely right. Some of the records will be less thorough than others, which is why we will not only be recommending in the protocol looking at the paper records but also therefore going to people's memories as well. I suspect that we will need to do both.

36. *Canon Dr Susan Atkin (Chelmsford)* asked the Chairman of the House of Bishops:

Has the House identified possible circumstances in which it might withdraw recognition from a theological college and, if it has, how it would establish whether those circumstances had arisen, either as part of its regular inspection regime or in the case of an emergency?

The Bishop of Carlisle (Rt Revd Graham Dow): The House of Bishops can consider withdrawing recognition from a theological college in the event of such a recommendation being made to it in an inspection report or if a report contained matters which the House judged were serious enough to warrant such consideration. In such situations, or in other exceptional circumstances, the House would want to inform itself fully about the situation before taking any action.

Secretary General

37. *Mr Robert Hammond (Chelmsford)* asked the Secretary General:

Can the Secretary General provide the total cost of producing the report *Talent and Calling* (GS 1650) and if possible a breakdown of staff time, consultancy costs, expenses, accommodation and production costs?

Mr William Fittall: The financial memorandum produced in February 2005 estimated that if the review was established, meeting costs might amount to £10,000 and staff costs about £75,000. In the event, the total costs associated with meetings were somewhat less than this at £5,435.22 and the cost of printing the report £1,477.59 plus VAT. There were no consultancy costs.

No additional staff were recruited for this work so it has had to be carried out by readjusting other priorities. A detailed record of the time spent by various members of staff has not been kept but the original staff cost estimate of £75,000 was probably not far out.

38. *Revd Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Secretary General:

Has consideration been given to whether the faith of the Prime Minister, whether generally or from the point of view of membership of particular faith traditions, has implications from the point of view of the appointment of bishops?

Mr William Fittall: The issue was first considered by Parliament in 1829 when it lifted the statutory prohibition on Roman Catholics becoming members of Parliament. The Roman Catholic Relief Act of that year and the Jews Relief Act of 1858 disqualify Roman Catholics or members of the Jewish faith from advising the Crown on Church of England appointments. There is no legislation touching on the role that those of other denominations, faiths or of no faith may play in relation to these appointments. The Prime Minister's statement of last Tuesday does, of course, touch on the future role of his office in ecclesiastical appointments and the Synod will have an opportunity to consider that on Monday.

Revd Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Could the Secretary General advise us whether it was my question or his reply to it that prompted Mr Brown to change his policy on these appointments?

Mr William Fittall: As the old hymn says, 'God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform'.

Mr John Ward (London): Given the PM's recent announcement and the fact that the PM is possibly generally withdrawing from Church governance, has the Secretary General

given consideration to whether this indicates that there might be a general tendency for change between Church and State and possibly the end to the bishops' monopoly on *ex officio* faith representation in the House of Lords?

Mr William Fittall: I think it is quite important to look at the text of what the Government said on Tuesday. You should now have received that in the paper that was put in the pigeon-holes. The statement was very careful and positive about the continuing link between Church and State and the value that the Government attaches to Establishment. Of course, there is a separate question about the future of House of Lords reform and we will see where that leads, but I think that what happened on Tuesday has to be seen in the context of other things that the Prime Minister is doing in the appointments area; for example, withdrawing his office from advising on the Master of Trinity Cambridge, the Poet Laureate, the Astronomer Royal and various other distinguished appointments where the Prime Minister has traditionally advised. I think that what was said in relation to Church appointments has to be understood in that broader context.

39. *Dr Anna Thomas-Betts (Oxford)* asked the Secretary General:

Has consideration been given to the possibility that the approval of any Anglican Covenant could represent Article 8 business (requiring a reference to the dioceses and, if the Synod so resolved, special majorities in each House or of the whole Synod, or both) on the basis that it involved 'a permanent and substantial change of relationship between the Church of England and another Christian body'?

40. *Revd Brian Lewis (Chelmsford)* asked the Secretary General:

Can it be confirmed that any proposal that the Synod authorize the Church of England to enter a Covenant with other Churches of the Anglican Communion in the form currently proposed by the Covenant Design Group would represent Article 8 business as defined in SO 131?

Mr William Fittall: With permission, I shall answer this and the Reverend Brian Lewis's question together. The short answer is that whether approval to a Covenant for the Anglican Communion would constitute Article 8 business is something that would fall to be determined by the Archbishops, the Prolocutors and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity only after the final version of the Covenant was available. If they concluded that it constituted a scheme for a permanent and substantial change of relationship between the Church of England and another Christian body 'a substantial number of whose members reside in Great Britain' then it would be Article 8 business. If they concluded that it did not, the Archbishops would, nevertheless, have a discretion to direct that it should if they considered that it constituted a scheme which affected the Church of England and another Christian body.

Revd Brian Lewis (Chelmsford): Thank you for that answer. It was in order to avoid the

Secretary General having to speculate about a hypothetical final form of the Covenant that I restricted my question to the specific draft Covenant now under consideration, so my supplementary is: are you able to say what advice the legal officers would give to those responsible for the decision if the final version was in the form currently proposed?

The Chairman: That requires an opinion on behalf of the Secretary General, which he is not able to give.

41. *Mr David Robilliard (Channel Islands)* asked the Secretary General:

Is there any formal definition of, or guidance with regard to, the phrase 'habitually attended public worship' in the context of applications for enrolment on the Electoral Roll, given that at one extreme attendance at a Christmas Day service might be deemed sufficient whilst at the other extreme weekly attendance might be required? If not, will consideration be given to the provision of guidelines in this matter?

Mr William Fittall: There is no definition of, or guidance on, what constitutes 'habitual attendance' at public worship for the purposes of the Church Representation Rules, other than what may be inferred from the fact that habitual attendance must be capable of taking place over a six-month period. It is for the individual seeking enrolment to decide whether he or she is able to declare him or herself to have habitually attended public worship in the parish during the previous six months. It is subsequently for the electoral roll officer to remove them under Rule 1(9) if, in the absence of illness or other sufficient cause, they have not attended public worship habitually during a period of six months.

42. *Mr John Hanks (Oxford)* asked the Secretary General:

Will the Secretary General ensure that accurate and up-to-date statistics are maintained as to the number of parishes that have passed Resolution A or Resolution B under the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993; or that have petitioned the bishop requesting that appropriate episcopal duties in the parish should be carried out in accordance with the Episcopal Ministry Act of Synod 1993?

Mr William Fittall: Special one-off exercises were conducted with each of the 44 diocesan bishop's offices to obtain these figures in connection with the Blackburn review in 1999 and the Rochester review in 2004. The relatively small changes in the figures over the five years suggested that it would not be cost effective to collect them annually. I do, however, think that it would be helpful to update the information for the Synod before it comes to consider the report from the Legislative Drafting Group on Women Bishops, so we shall with the support of that group be carrying out a further exercise in the coming months.

43. *Mr Peter Smith (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Secretary General:

Following the answer to Question 46 at the February Group of Sessions to the effect that there is no definitive list of parishes with a liability for chancel repairs, and given that homeowners, when selling, are often required to take out indemnity insurance against any such liability, has consideration been given to the Church itself setting up an indemnity scheme so as to procure the substantial premiums currently paid to insurance companies for the financial benefit of the Church?

Mr William Fittall: No. It is important to remember that by 2013 chancel repair obligations will have to be registered with the Land Registry, so from that point prospective purchasers will be able to discover definitively whether a property does carry with it that liability.

Mr Peter Smith (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich): Thank you for that helpful and constructive answer because it has brought into the public domain that there is a cut-off date of 2013. I am very grateful for that information being in the public domain.

At the present time, many householders who have no allegiance to the Church are very annoyed by having to pay premiums on chancel repair liabilities. Is the Secretary General aware that this is affecting the mission and witness of the Church at parish level?

Mr William Fittall: Undoubtedly the chancel repair liability issues are complex and difficult, but we are where we are: I think that things will be better in 2013. I would say that I think some of the anxiety raised about this by people in the property sector is very over-stated. We are not aware of any case, certainly in the 22 years since the Law Commission report of 1985, where somebody has been presented with a chancel repair liability that they did not know about when they acquired the property. In the case that aroused much publicity and went all the way to the House of Lords four years ago, Lord Scott in the House of Lords was quite clear that in that case the people did know about the liability when they acquired the property. It is a problem but I think the scale of the problem is often over-stated.

*44. Mr Michael Burbeck (Salisbury) asked the Secretary General:

Will the Secretary General initiate the process whereby the Church Representation Rules may be made available, free, on the Internet?

Mr William Fittall replied: There is already a wide range of reference material available for downloading from the Church of England web site, most of it free but some, notably *Crockford*, accessible only on payment of an annual subscription, to reflect the significant production costs.

The new task group for Church House Publishing will be overseeing the development of a revised electronic publishing strategy over the coming months and will be looking at the present arrangements for publishing reference and legal publications – including

Church Representation Rules – which are currently available only in hard copy for payment.

Clerk to the Synod

*45. *Mr Tom Sutcliffe (Southwark)* asked the Clerk to the Synod:

How many times has a serving Archbishop of Canterbury missed an entire Group of Sessions of the General Synod?

Mr David Williams replied: An examination of our records indicates that there have been two such instances in the last 30 years, the first in February 1980, when neither president was present: the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, was yet to undergo Confirmation of Election, and the Archbishop of York, Dr Stuart Blanch, was ill.

More recently Archbishop Rowan Williams was not present at the November 2002 Group of Sessions. At that point, like Robert Runcie in February 1980, he had yet to undergo Confirmation of Election.

In fact there is no general requirement under Standing Orders that either or both of the Archbishops have to be present throughout a Group of Sessions (or indeed at all). However, depending on the circumstances, the Standing Orders may require at least one of the presidents to be present for certain sorts of business (e.g. to take the Chair); and other functions can require them both to be party to a decision that needs to be taken in the course of a Group of Sessions (e.g. the determination of whether something is Article 7 or 8 business).

Board of Education

46. *Mr Aiden Hargreaves-Smith (London)* asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

What action has been taken in response to the motion passed following the Synod's debate in February 2005 on *Higher Education and the Church's Mission* (GS 1567); and in particular

- (a) what efforts have been made to call on Her Majesty's Government and higher education institutions to recognize explicitly that higher education is properly concerned with a broad understanding of education and with the development of the whole person; and
- (b) what progress has been made in preparing a resource guide on good practice for chaplains and lay Anglicans working in universities and colleges?

The Bishop of Dover (Rt Revd Stephen Venner): The Synod motion forms the basis of the Church of England higher education strategy, which was agreed by the Board of Education in May. It followed wide consultation and will be circulated to Synod members, the Government and others later this month.

The concern for a broad understanding of education and the development of the whole person underpins the strategy and is the focus of the first of the four key areas. This understanding was articulated in a recent successful bid for Government funds for a project hosted by the Church of England surveying the development of chaplaincy in a context where diverse faith communities are present.

The strategy gives timescales for the production of guidance on good practice in ministry in universities and colleges. The resource guide requested in the motion is provided for also.

47. *Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield)* asked the Chairman of the Board of Education:

What teaching and learning packages are being put in place to help and support Church of England schools to make the most of the school twinning projects which are now encouraged by the Government?

The Bishop of Dover: The Board supports dioceses in encouraging all Church of England schools to take seriously their responsibilities for promoting community cohesion. There are a number of twinning projects in place at local level, enabling pupils to forge relationships with pupils from a different context. For example, in the diocese of Manchester one of our rural schools has regular joint activities with a Church of England school in the centre of Oldham, where all the children come from Islamic families. The Board is also actively promoting the formation of international links, in a joint project with Partnerships for World Mission and the Methodist Church.

Mrs Mary Judkins (Wakefield): After the challenging speech by Sir Al about participation and involvement with the school curriculum of faith and enjoyment, how can the Church of England lead the way in school twinning projects rather than follow active local authorities, not just to encourage but promote school twinning: i.e. how do we do it?

The Bishop of Dover: What a very good question!

Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division

48. *Miss Fay Wilson-Rudd (Bath and Wells)* asked the Chairman of the Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division:

Does the Division have information available as to how many Church of England buildings are open outside the times of church services?

The Bishop of London (Rt Revd Richard Chartres): Based on the responses to the latest annual parochial returns, only 21 per cent of church buildings in 2005 were not open to casual visitors but:

More than half of all church buildings were open over 10 hours per week

Over a quarter of all church buildings were open on average more than seven hours per day

1 in 20 were open 24 hours per day.

49. *Miss Fay Wilson-Rudd (Bath and Wells)* asked the Chairman of the Cathedrals and Church Buildings Division:

Does the Division have information available as to how many Church of England church buildings now have kitchen and cloakroom facilities incorporated within them?

The Bishop of London: The same annual returns for 2005 indicate that 37 per cent of churches had kitchen facilities and 44 per cent had WC facilities. That is some contrast, I might say, to St Paul's School, founded by Dean Colet, who solved the problem of the needs of 153 boys by hiring out the space between two buttresses on the north side of the Cathedral on the payment of one red rose a year, which would hardly have covered the nuisance, I imagine!

Dr Julian Litten (Chelmsford): Could not the Cathedral and Church Buildings Division recommend to those churches without lavatory accommodation what a great convenience such a facility would be?

The Bishop of London: I think that is a very wholesome suggestion.

Council for Christian Unity

50. *The Archdeacon of Malmesbury (Ven. Alan Hawker)* asked the Chairman of the Council for Christian Unity:

Now that the Methodist Church (with whom we have a covenant relationship in England) has signed in Seoul in summer 2006 the 1999 Joint Statement between Lutherans and Roman Catholics concerning justification by faith, thereby making it a tripartite ecumenical statement, what response is planned (if any at all) by the Church of England?

The Bishop of Peterborough (Rt Revd Ian Cundy): The joint declaration on the doctrine of justification between the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation established a 'basic consensus' and took the form of each communion stating its own position before offering a joint statement. It enabled the historic mutual

condemnations on this particular doctrine to be set aside. The World Methodist Council has affirmed the declaration and formally associated itself with it. International Anglican-Lutheran dialogue has not encountered difficulties in the area of justification and there are no historic condemnations to be overcome. Various Anglican Churches (including the Church of England) are in communion with various Lutheran Churches, which is, of course, not true of the Roman Catholic Church and Lutheran Churches. The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission considered justification in its 1985 report *Salvation and the Church*, which achieved remarkable convergence and was 'warmly welcomed' by the 1988 Lambeth Conference.

51. *Revd Mark Sowerby (Ripon and Leeds)* asked the Chairman of the Council for Christian Unity:

Our Roman Catholic and Orthodox sister churches have made public statements about the distancing effect of the Church of England's decision to ordain women to the priesthood and now possibly to the episcopate. In the same spirit of frankness, will the Council for Christian Unity consider promoting a similar statement after the Methodist Church's decision to reject the historic episcopate?

The Bishop of Peterborough: The Methodist Church has repeatedly stated its willingness in principle to become an episcopal Church. The Conference in 2000 resolved that the sign they were willing to receive was that of 'the historic episcopal succession'. Since then work has been done on models of episcopacy that would be consistent with the Methodist Church's ecclesiology and polity. The report *What Sort of Bishops?* was referred in 2005 to the Connexion for consultation. The results of this process were rather meagre and showed little enthusiasm for episcopacy, apparently unaware of the decisions made by past Conferences. The Conference next week will consider a recommendation that it should not 'at this point take any steps towards embracing the historic episcopate' but that the Joint Implementation Commission should bring recommendations to the Conference at a future date. The JIC expects to offer some constructive proposals next year.

Revd Mark Sowerby (Ripon and Leeds): Does the Council for Christian Unity consider that the lack of enthusiasm for episcopacy to which you refer in your answer should be more openly identified as retrograde and injurious to the cause of Christian unity?

The Bishop of Peterborough: I think we have to let the Methodist Conference follow up its own procedures. Both Dr Avis of the CCU and I will be at the Conference next week. Whether we shall speak on this item I do not know, but I am confident that through the work of the JIC we will keep this matter on the agenda. I am hopeful that we will have a good outcome in due course.

Ministry Division

52. *Revd Stephen Lynas (Bath and Wells)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

In a climate where saving administration costs is seen as important, when the recent consultation documents about retirement housing were sent out to all clergy over the age of 55, why was 'large letter' (A4) format used instead of the much cheaper 'small letter' format; and what consideration was given to enabling electronic return of the survey forms?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds (Rt Revd John Packer): The format used for the postal survey was the cheapest option, taking into account printing, postage and ease of processing replies. We did consider conducting the exercise electronically but this would have excluded some clergy, and the option of carrying out a combined electronic and postal survey was too complicated to produce any cost savings. Having real information about the retirement housing needs of thousands of clergy in the coming years will prove to be well worth the modest investment in this consultation exercise.

53. *Dr John Bull (Newcastle)* asked the Chairman of the Deployment, Remuneration and Conditions of Service Committee:

In view of Canon Simon Bessant's article in the *Church Times* of 8 June 2006 'The Church should offer clerics property bonds', how is the Church going to secure the long-term housing requirements of retiring clergy who may have only a retirement pension and a State pension upon which to live?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: A review of the support the Church provides for housing in retirement is currently under way and will report to the Archbishop's Council this autumn. The chairman of the review group has recently written to all clergy who are within 10 years of retirement age asking them to complete a questionnaire about their retirement housing needs. I would urge clergy to respond to this as the more information the review group has the better it can consider the issue and the more useful its report will be.

Dr John Bull (Newcastle): Would the committee consider providing funding for clergy to purchase retirement housing for up to 10 years before the clergy attain retirement age, if the clergy so request it?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: That is indeed one of the suggestions which is being considered by the sub-committee.

Revd Canon Simon Bessant (Blackburn): Has the consultation document gone out to clergy over 55 to ask those clergy whether they have (a) the memory and (b) written evidence that at some time in the past a DDO had directed them to sell their house on the grounds that the Church would take care of them?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: This is indeed one of the points which is made by some clergy in terms of their memory and that will come as evidence to the sub-committee.

54. *Revd Canon Gordon Oliver (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Could the Chairman of the Ministry Division please explain why the standard Church of England form for ministerial appointments, section 6 – marital status, asks not only for information about the candidate’s marital status (which has relevance to the interpretation of Canon C 4 paras 3 and 3A), but also for the spouse’s name and profession or occupation and the names and dates of birth of any of the applicant’s children?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I imagine that many bishops find it helpful to have this information for pastoral reasons, but it may well be that the appointments form is not the right place to gather it! There is a whole range of work being carried out by staff to support the proposed clergy terms of service legislation. As part of that a review of our guidance on good practice in appointments and the standard appointment form will begin in the autumn. Where we are asking for information that is not considered relevant changes will be recommended. It is worth pointing out that dioceses are not obliged to use the standard form and I know that several do not.

Revd Canon Gordon Oliver (Rochester): I am very grateful for the assurance that this will be considered as part of the process of clergy terms of service legislation. Will the Bishop also give the assurance that guidelines on best practice for interviewing and appointing clergy to clergy posts will be produced which make clear that the inclusion of information about spouses and children is not an acceptable requirement on application forms, and also ask the relevant body to consider whether the practice of including spouses in interview receptions may have discriminatory effects, especially towards single applicants, for many parish appointments?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I suppose it does in some circumstances have the opposite effect, does it not, Gordon? There is a range of those sorts of issue which is being looked at together in the terms of service legislation.

Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark): When I last filled out one of these forms about three-and-a-half years ago, there was a question in the body of the form about my health. Could the Chairman of DRACSC confirm that that is still the case, and if so would he consider following best practice in his secular role by removing any questions about health to a separate document, which could be made confidential and not be seen by a wide group of people?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: We will indeed take that into account in considerations.

55. *Revd Alastair Cutting (Chichester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Given the deanery’s role as a focus for mission and collaborative ministry, has the

Ministry Division considered whether and, if so, what additional arrangements need to be put in place for youth workers, pastoral workers, NSMs, or other focal ministers to be licensed to, or in some circumstances employed in, an area wider than a single parish, and when such appointments could first be made?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: A cleric cannot be licensed directly to a deanery because there is no ecclesiastical office which relates to a deanery rather than a benefice or parish, nor can a deanery synod act as employer, because it is not a legal entity. However, there is no obstacle to someone being employed by the DBF (with a general licence to preach) with duties specified in relation to a particular deanery – or indeed to be given such duties as part of a dual-role post. There are many examples of such arrangements working successfully and I am not convinced that additional arrangements need to be in place further to enable this.

Revd Alastair Cutting (Chichester): Looking at fresh expressions of deanery and new ecclesiastical offices that perforate historic parish boundaries that may be appropriate for the Church's future ministry, and where at the moment a deanery mission cannot currently get insurance for its activities if it is not a legal entity, what steps would need to be put in place to make a deanery a legal entity for future mission of this sort?

The Bishop of Ripon and Leeds: I think that it would be extremely complicated and dangerous to make deaneries an employing organization, and that the best way of doing this is to work with the diocesan registry and the DBF, so that someone's job is actually confined to that particular deanery.

56. *Mrs Christine McMullen (Derby)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Would the Ministry Division explain what it does to ensure that the governors of the theological colleges and other theological institutions are fully trained and competent so that they are able fully to exercise their joint and several responsibilities for the prevention of failures in management?

The Bishop of Derby (Rt Revd Alastair Redfern): The governors of each independent theological institution are responsible for ensuring that the governing body contains all the necessary skills and expertise and is competent to oversee the institution. The Ministry Division has recently published guidance to the trustees and governors concerning their role, and drew attention to the advice available from the Charity Commission and the National Hub for Expertise in Governance; Ministry Division staff are also available to offer advice on particular issues. It is proposed to run seminars on governance later this year and the Ministry Division is looking at the possibility of providing more specific training courses for governors.

57. *Mrs Christine McMullen (Derby)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Would the Ministry Division explain what arrangements are in place to ensure that the management of the theological colleges and other theological establishments is trained and competent in all aspects of the management of staff, students and finances in this very particular type of academic institution?

The Bishop of Derby: It is the responsibility of the governors of the independent theological institutions to ensure that the staff are competent to fulfil their role and management tasks. The independent inspection process seeks evidence that there are effective financial, administrative and management structures; that tutorial and administrative staff are resourced and able to fulfil their role; and that there is a well-developed and operative appraisal system for all staff. Where the inspectors have concern in any of these areas they would draw attention in the inspection report to the areas where improvement needed to be made. The Ministry Division also works with the association of principals and staffs to share good practice in these areas.

The remaining Questions were answered in writing.

58. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

How does the Ministry Division satisfy itself that a theological college is being properly governed and run and that it has a robust risk management programme in place before money is allocated from Vote 1 for its continued existence?

The Bishop of Derby replied: It is the responsibility of the governing bodies of the legally independent charities to ensure that the appropriate systems for governance and risk management are in place. The inspectors appointed by the House of Bishops will, under criterion C of their guidelines, report on the governance, management, constitution, and organization of the theological institution. The institution is expected to respond to any recommendations made by the inspection report. The Bishops' Committee for Ministry reviews both the inspection report and the follow-up reports in recommending to the House of Bishops the continuing recognition of the institution as suitable for the training of Anglican ordinands. An institution is entitled to receive funding from Vote 1 for the sponsored students whilst it remains recognized as suitable for training by the House of Bishops.

59. *Mrs April Alexander (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Can the Ministry Division assure the Synod that all those who work in theological colleges have appropriate contracts with those colleges to cover any agreement to deliver teaching and other professional services to them, whether the remuneration for those services is taxed under schedule E or schedule D of the Income and Taxes Act 1988 and that those contracts cover all aspects of current employment and other appropriate legislation?

The Bishop of Derby replied: It is responsibility of the governors of the independent institutions to ensure that the contracts of employment for all members of staff comply with all aspects of current employment and other appropriate legislation. Whilst I would hope that all members of staff do have appropriate contracts, I am unable to confirm that this is the case; likewise I am unable to comment on the tax position of individual members of staff. However, given the nature of the work, I would expect that most if not all payments should be subject to taxation under PAYE.

60. *Mr Anthony Archer (St Albans)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

On what basis does the Ministry Division agree block grant and maintenance funding with the theological colleges, and is this designed according to the principles of full cost recovery?

The Bishop of Derby replied: No. Funding is provided under the terms set out in *Managing Planned Growth* (GS Misc 597). This excludes the financing and depreciation costs for the purchase or improvement of capital assets and the provision of working capital and reserves: these are the responsibility of the college. It also excludes the cost of salaries in excess of the Lichfield scale, staff in excess of the staffing guidelines and running costs of other forms of training that fall outside the scope of Vote 1. The funding mechanism also takes into account the other income and 20 per cent of the conference income available to the institution. These principles have been carried forward into the block grant funding system that will apply from the academic year 2008/09 onwards. To do otherwise would have resulted in a significant increase in the national apportionment for training at a time when the Church could not afford it.

61. *Revd Canon Gordon Oliver (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Can the Ministry Division commend any practical courses of action to an IME institution which, through the policy of imposing below inflation increases on the Vote 1 budget year on year has been forced into deficit budgeting, is facing urgent financial difficulties as a direct result of this, and has been refused assistance of a low interest loan by the Ministry Division without the case for this being heard in face-to-face interview?

The Bishop of Derby replied: It is the responsibility of the governors to manage the financial affairs of the institution within the available resources. Where a loan is required because of cash flow purposes institutions should approach their bankers, especially where the institution has a significant property portfolio. The Archbishops' Council is unable to act as the banker of last resort to the independent institutions. Contrary to what is stated by the questioner, the Vote 1 budget has been increased for inflationary increases year on year although the funding given to individual institutions does take into account a number of factors such as the actual numbers of ordinands; the expected costs; and the level of the reserves which can mean a reduction in cash terms.

62. *Mr Andrew Presland (Peterborough)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Will the Ministry Division be carrying out a survey on the extent to which bishops and diocesan directors of ordinands are steering ordinands away from particular Anglican theological colleges, following the concerns expressed by the chair of the Association of Ordinands and Candidates for Ministry (AOCM) and the Director of the Ministry Division in the *Church of England Newspaper* of 25 May 2007 on the sampling methodology that was used for a similar survey carried out by AOCM?

The Bishop of Derby replied: The Ministry Division has no plan to carry out such a survey. It welcomed the engagement of AOCM in this area and discussed the outcome of its work with it. However, as noted, it expressed some concerns about the methodology of the survey that was carried out. The Ministry Division is reassured through regular contact with the diocesan directors of ordinands that candidates are given an appropriate choice of theological college, and indeed that many candidates are actively encouraged to visit a range of possible colleges. In addition the division is working with the research and statistics unit on a detailed piece of research on understanding modern-day perceptions of vocation and the role of ordained ministry among ordinands.

63. *Revd Brunel James (Ripon and Leeds)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

What powers does the Ministry Division possess to ensure good human resource management at theological colleges and thus help avoid situations which may damage the reputation of the wider Church?

The Bishop of Derby replied: The Ministry Division does not have direct powers to ensure that good human resource management is available to the governors of the legally independent institutions. However it encourages governors of these institutions as a part of their governance responsibilities to keep up-to-date in this and other areas. The independent institutions are subject to a process of quinquennial inspection by inspectors. The inspectors have the power to draw attention to any weaknesses within the governance and management structures. If these weaknesses were considered sufficiently serious, and the institution refused to take appropriate action, then the Bishops' Committee for Ministry could make recommendations to the House of Bishops concerning the continuing recognition of the institution as suitable for the training of ordinands.

64. *Revd Hugh Lee (Oxford)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Given that the Ministry Division is currently developing guidelines on harassment and bullying, what is the response of the theological training and education committee to any allegations of bullying and harassment in theological colleges and courses which

arise in the meantime? In particular, is it willing to recommend to the governing body or the House of Bishops an independent enquiry when this is called for?

The Bishop of Derby replied: The Ministry Division's advice is that the responsible body, normally the governing body of a college or course, should properly investigate any allegations and that appropriate action should be taken in the light of a completed investigation. It would not normally be for the division to recommend an independent enquiry, unless it was discovered that proper internal processes had not been carried out.

65. *Revd Jonathan Alderton-Ford (St Edmundsbury and Ipswich)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Given the reports in the media that staff relationships have broken down at Wycliffe Hall theological college, what steps is the Ministry Division taking to resolve the matter?

The Bishop of Derby replied: The Bishop of Norwich, the Chair of Ministry Division, has been in regular contact with the Bishop of Liverpool, the Chair of the Wycliffe council. Further, the Bishops' Committee for Ministry has set in place a process to inform itself regarding the situation at Wycliffe. A small team of independent advisors, drawn from current senior inspectors, will report to the Bishops' Committee for Ministry, which can then take any further action, if required.

66. *Revd Stephen Coles (London)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Does the Ministry Division have a policy to ensure that homophobia is not tolerated in theological colleges and if so can this policy be made public?

The Bishop of Derby replied: The Ministry Division's policy is expressed in the learning outcomes for candidates and in the inspections criteria, both endorsed by the House of Bishops. The former calls for candidates 'to form and sustain relationships, both with those who are like-minded and those who differ, marked by integrity, empathy, respect, honesty and insight'. Similarly, the inspections criteria require institutions to meet current legal requirements, have policies about their corporate life and show evidence of how those policies are being put into practice. Both the learning outcomes and the inspections' criteria are public documents.

67. *Mr Jim Cheeseman (Rochester)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

How many of the current (a) diocesan bishops; (b) suffragan bishops; (c) deans; (d) archdeacons trained at each of the Church of England's theological colleges?

The Bishop of Derby replied: The figures are as follows:

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES/COURSES ATTENDED BY SENIOR CLERGY

Colleges	Numbers Attended							
	Archdeacons		Deans		Diocesan Bishops		Suffragan Bishops	
College of the Resurrection, Mirfield	5		0		4		2	
Cranmer Hall Durham	1		0		2		2	
Edinburgh Theological College	3		1		1		0	
Oak Hill College	4		0		2		3	
Ridley Hall, Cambridge	6		0		6		4	
St.John's College, Nottingham	4	7	3	3	1	1	7	7
<i>London College of Divinity (merged with St John's, Notts)</i>	3		0		0		0	
St.Michael's College, Llandaff	1		0		0		0	
St.Stephen's House, Oxford	5		2		0		5	
Trinity College, Bristol	8	10	2	2	1	3	4	4
<i>Clifton Theological College (merged to form Trinity College)</i>	1		0		1		0	
<i>Tyndale Hall, Bristol (merged to form Trinity College)</i>	1		0		1		0	
Westcott House, Cambridge	15		5		0		4	
Wycliffe Hall, Oxford	5		2		3		5	
Ripon College, Cuddesdon	6	13	3	13	2	14	3	11
<i>Ripon Hall Oxford (merged to form Ripon College, Cuddesdon)</i>	1		1		2		2	
<i>Cuddesdon College, Oxford (merged to form Ripon College, Cuddesdon)</i>	6		9		10		6	
Queens College, Birmingham	1		0		1		3	
Courses								
North West Ordination Course	1		0		0		0	
Northern Ordination Course	1		0		0		0	
Southern Dioceses Ministerial Training Scheme	2		0		0		0	
Southwark Ordination Course	2		1		0		0	
Lichfield Theological Course	0		0		0		0	
St Albans Ministerial Training Scheme	1		0		0		0	

Colleges no longer providing initial ministerial training								
Kings College London	3		2		2		3	
Sarum & Wells Theological College	6	7	2	2	1	2	1	1
Wells Theological College (merged to form Sarum & Wells)	0		0		1		0	
Sarum Theological College (merged to form Sarum & Wells)	1		0		0		0	
Chichester Theological College	2		0		0		2	
Lincoln Theological College	4		2		1		0	
Lichfield Theological College	0		0		0		0	
St. Augustine's College, Canterbury	2		4		0		6	
St Chad's College, Durham	0		0		0		1	
Ely Theological College	0		0		0		0	
Kelham Theological College	1		1		0		1	
Canterbury School of Ministry	0		0		0		1	
Bishop's College, Cheshunt	1		0		1		0	
Overseas Colleges								
Melbourne College of Divinity	1		0		0		0	
St Paul's Collegem, Grahamstown	0		1		0		0	
Trinity College Toronto	0		0		0		1	
<i>Total numbers of senior clergy in each category (as at 24/05/07)</i>	104		41		43		66	

68. *Mr Adrian Greenwood (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Ministry Division:

Does the Ministry Division still regard ordained local ministry as a valid and effective expression of priestly ministry within the Church of England?

The Bishop of Derby replied: The Ministry Division continues to regard OLM as a valid and effective expression of priestly ministry. At the same time, patterns of ministry are changing in order to respond more fully to needs of the Church and the world. Because of this in 2006 the Ministry Division asked diocesan bishops for their views on the place and future of local forms of ordained ministry within their dioceses. This piece of work indicated that a good majority of dioceses had a positive view of the value either of OLM or of other forms of self-supporting ordained ministry that is deployed locally. Thus OLM continues to be valued both in dioceses with formal OLM schemes and in other dioceses which have learnt from their experience. The pattern of ministry at the local level continues to be a matter for individual dioceses to determine in response to local need.

Mission and Public Affairs Council

69. *Mr John Ashwin (Chichester)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Has consideration been given to how the Church of England should respond to the evangelistic opportunity offered by events such as the Glastonbury Festival?

Dr Philip Giddings replied: A number of our mission agencies and local churches are already involved in festivals of this kind, especially connecting with those who say they reject religion but are open to spirituality. In the case of Glastonbury the Bath and Wells diocese had a significant presence this year, as they have for many years. They were joined by groups such as Elemental, with a team of 50 people including the Revd Steve Hollinghurst of Church Army's Sheffield centre. Others at Glastonbury included the Iona Community. Nationally the Church of England conducts its work in this area through membership of the group for evangelization of Churches Together in England. The group shares information and good practice so that those who are called to this ministry of presence and proclamation are properly resourced and supported. Synod members may wish to see resources for 'Equipping your church in a spiritual age' online at www.ciasa.org.uk.

70. *Mrs Alison Ruoff (London)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Given that an overwhelming majority of people in the UK regard it as a Christian country, what plans has the Church of England to have a presence at the Olympic Games in 2012, for worship and outreach, when Muslims are seeking to build a mosque adjacent to the site for 12,000 worshippers – larger than any church in the whole of the nation?

Dr Philip Giddings replied: Christian presence and involvement in the 2012 Olympics will be substantial. The Church of England is involved in the ecumenical initiative More Than Gold whose purpose is to co-ordinate the work of the Churches in offering outreach, pastoral care and hospitality to those attending the Olympics. The dioceses of Chelmsford, London and Southwark are appointing a senior clergy person to co-ordinate the work of the Church of England across our capital city, in liaison with More than Gold. This work is done in liaison with specialized mission agencies such as Christians in Sport (www.christiansinsport.org.uk/).

71. *Mr Frank Knaggs (Newcastle)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Bearing in mind the resolution of the Synod in November 2002 (Barry Barnes's PMM carried by 222 votes to 22) regarding the Abortion Act, what progress has been made (perhaps in conjunction with other professional bodies) in restricting the abuses of the

Abortion Act, particularly from the point of view of the areas of concern set out in the resolution?

Dr Philip Giddings replied: MPA is alert to opportunities when the Church of England's position, as reflected in the Synod resolution, can be represented in public debate. We are aware, for example, of the possibility that the forthcoming Human Tissue and Embryos Bill (on which MPA is doing much work) may be used to introduce clauses seeking to introduce abortion on demand in the first trimester. If so we will express the Church's opposition through a number of means including our new parliamentary e-bulletin, briefing papers for MPs and our contacts in Parliament. We continue to stay in close touch with groups such as the Christian Medical Fellowship, which recently lobbied the BMA on this issue, the Lawyers' Christian Fellowship, SPUC, LIFE, and CARE.

72. *Mrs Gill Morrison (Peterborough)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Has a response been made to the Government over the draft Human Tissues and Embryos Bill, which has just been published?

Dr Philip Giddings replied: Yes. It is available in full on the Church of England website; a hard copy can be sent to Mrs Morrison if she wishes. In addition Synod members may be interested to know that the Bishop of St Albans is a member of the joint committee scrutinizing the draft Bill, and that the Bishop of Swindon has given evidence on our behalf.

73. *Mr Nicholas Harding (Southwell and Nottingham)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Given the widespread concern about the fragmentation of society and mistrust between generations, how is the Mission and Public Affairs Council helping the Church develop a model of intergenerational cohesion?

Dr Philip Giddings replied: The question of mistrust between generations is a complex matter on which definitive research is at present very thin. The Mission and Public Affairs Division is currently conducting a scoping project to consider key issues around ageing and older people in Church and society and to help define the most effective points at which the Church can make a difference. We are also involved in the Good Childhood enquiry, which will help focus the questions which arise at the other end of the age spectrum. These projects may help us pinpoint the key intergenerational issues for the Church. Meanwhile, local Church-sponsored projects with young people help build connections within the Church community across the generations. Our colleagues in the Education Division held a convention in June for diocesan officers working with children and young people, which aimed to develop more coherent approaches in dioceses.

74. *Revd David Primrose (Gloucester)* asked the Chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council:

Further to the report *Taking Responsibility for Crime* (GS 1647) and in recognition of the Christian roots of the Probation Service that was formed in 1907, in what way is the Church of England encouraging the celebration of the historical and ongoing work of the Probation Service?

Dr Philip Giddings replied: The aim of rehabilitating offenders, which has guided the work of the Probation Service, was strongly asserted in the Synod's debate in March. On 11 June a service to celebrate the service's centenary was held in Westminster Abbey. The Bishop of Worcester delivered the sermon, expounding the theological basis and practical implications of the service's restorative purpose. On 30 June a service of thanksgiving was held by the Probation Service Christian Fellowship at St Matthew's, Westminster. Many local criminal justice groups have reaffirmed their links with the service and given support to its members at this time of change and challenge, especially as the service's recent achievements in reducing re-offending have not been fully recognized. At national level the Church has sought to protect the role of the service in debates over the proposals in the Offender Management Bill to contract out probation functions to the private and voluntary sectors.

Business Committee

75. *Dr Edmund Marshall (Wakefield)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

What steps are being taken to avoid future clashes between the dates of the July Sessions of General Synod and the dates of the annual Conference of the Methodist Church?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick replied: The Methodist Church is engaged in a process of reviewing the purpose and form of the Methodist Conference, which meets in different venues each year, moving around the country. Part of that process involves searching for venues that are suitable for the structures and functioning of the Conference as this process develops. It is proving hard to succeed in that search without having some flexibility over dates, and this has occasionally meant that the dates of the Conference overlap with those of the Synod.

For there to be joint planning of the dates of Synod and of Conference, it would be important that the timings and venues of both bodies were negotiable, and Synod members might find unacceptable the unfixing of the already announced dates of Synod until 2010. However we will continue to work with our Methodist colleagues to try to avoid unhelpful scheduling of meetings in the future.

76. *Mr Clive Scowen (London)* asked the Chairman of the Business Committee:

Has any consideration been given to whether the provisions of the Church

Representation Rules relating to qualification for membership of parochial church councils, and any other synodical bodies having charity trustee functions, need to be amended to reflect the restrictions imposed by current charities legislation on the employees of a charity serving as trustees of that charity? If so what was the conclusion of that consideration? If not will consideration now be given to that question?

Revd Prebendary Kay Garlick replied: The possibility raised by Mr Scowen has not been considered. Because members of a PCC are in the position of charity trustees, they are subject to a number of fiduciary duties, including the duty not to profit from their trust. That means that they cannot be paid under a contract with the PCC, whether for employment or for services, unless specifically authorized under the Charities Acts. Against that background it is not immediately clear what advantage would be gained by amending the Church Representation Rules in relation to qualifications for membership. However if Mr Scowen would like to write to the Elections Review Group (which is currently examining a range of issues relating to synodical government before making recommendations to the Business Committee about possible changes), I am sure that it will be happy to give careful consideration to any proposals he may wish to make.

Clergy Discipline Commission

77. *Revd Canon Simon Butler (Southwark)* asked the Chairman of the Clergy Discipline Commission:

Is the Commission satisfied that the principles of natural justice are being honoured in the operation of the Clergy Discipline Measure?

His Honour Judge John Bullimore replied: Yes. The basic principles of natural justice are recognized in Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights as applied by the Human Rights Act. Advice from leading counsel obtained while the Measure was being considered by the Synod confirmed that the procedures under it were compatible with Article 6; and the Rules Committee was careful to ensure that the Rules made under it were similarly compliant, meeting the requirements of procedural fairness at all stages of the disciplinary process.

The Session was adjourned at 9.58 p.m.