

Diocesan Synod News March 2014

Women bishops' legislation approved

"I believe we have arrived at a better place", said Revd Stephen Trott introducing the main debate of the day at the March synod. He suggested that the previous proposals, which were defeated in General Synod in 2012, "were too divisive" and that by contrast the fresh proposals were fair to all. The Synod clearly agreed with him and after a 45 minute debate voted in favour with a large majority. The result will be fed back to General Synod where a further debate and vote will take place in July.

Read a full report of the debate [here](#)

Bishop asks: "walk together with Jesus"

Bishop Donald used his Presidential Address to speak about several controversial issues, including bishops in the House of Lords, women bishops, and sexuality. "While we discuss please may we respect and love one another and walk together with Jesus." He called for prayer that all can be held together within the church. "That doesn't mean compromise or being afraid to say what we believe," he stressed, "but to disagree well." He outlined some the things he has done so far in the House of Lords, hoped that the debate on women bishops "will be the last thing we need to say" on the subject, and explained the facilitated process of discussion about same sex marriage which may begin later this year.

You can read a report of his address [here](#)

You can listen to the whole address (about 15 minutes) [here](#)

General Synod matters

Synod heard from Liz Holdsworth, a member of General Synod, who reported on the business conducted in London in November and February. This included the Archbishop of York calling for the evangelisation of Britain and drawing attention to poverty and low wage levels. Synod affirmed its support of church schools, the need to act against climate change and gender-based violence. It dealt with voting rights for diocesan synods and gave more power to PCCs over church property and parochial fees.

You can read full reports of all previous General Synods [here](#):

<http://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/general-synod/reports-of-proceedings.aspx>

Other matters

The annual reports of Boards and committees, a fairly lengthy document, was received by the Synod without debate. Diocesan Secretary Andrew Roberts earned both laughter and applause as he read aloud, as required by law, the convoluted legal language of "The Act of Synod Proclamation of Vacancy in See Regulations". In a written answer to a previously-submitted question, the Diocesan Ministry and pastoral Committee said that the report *Anecdote to Evidence* on church growth "has the potential to be of assistance to parishes."

Diocesan Collect for Growth

Almighty and Heavenly Father,
creator of the world,
redeemer and sustainer of all,
we pray for the growth of the diocese of Peterborough,
that through your Holy Spirit
we might grow in ministry, witness and love,
that more people may know your Son,
and in our lives and communities your kingdom come.
Amen.