

prevention and detection of modern slavery and human trafficking, and in offering support to its victims.

ELECTORAL COLLEGE REVIEW

The Chair of the Working Group, the Revd Canon Steven Kirk, presented a paper to the September session containing proposals to reform the Church's procedures for electing bishops. The proposals recommend moving to a two-stage process, with open applications, shortlisting and interviewing of candidates, while retaining the existing electoral college structure for the election of a shortlisted candidate as the new bishop. Governing Body welcomed the proposals, without endorsing all the recommendations, referring the matter to the Standing Committee for further development and the introduction of the requisite legislation.

FAREWELLS

At the end of the September meeting, among other farewells, the Archbishop of Wales led tributes to Mr Julian Luke following his appointment as the Head of Policy and Legislation Committee Service at the National Assembly for Wales. Mr Luke has served the Church in Wales ably for the last 23 years, most recently as the Head of Secretariat and Archbishop's Deputy Registrar.

doi:10.1017/S0956618X19001832

General Synod of the Church of Ireland

May 2019

CATE TURNER

Member of General Synod

INTRODUCTION

This year's General Synod, the second meeting of the triennium, was held for the first time in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe. The venue was the Millennium Forum Theatre in the centre of the historic walled city of Derry/Londonderry and a civic reception was held at the Guildhall, hosted by the mayor of Derry City and Strabane District. The Synod considered Bills relating

to Holy Communion by extension; liturgical provision for miscarriage, stillbirth and neonatal death; and diocesan boundaries.

HOLY COMMUNION BY EXTENSION

Following a resolution last year, a Bill was brought forward, and passed, for the provision of Holy Communion by extension for those unable to be present at the public celebration. The liturgy had been prepared following a number of years of experimental liturgy approved by the House of Bishops, the use of which had been carefully analysed. The analysis showed that it had been used more in some areas than others but, where used, it was meeting a real need. It was stressed that this is specifically to be used following a service of Holy Communion, making a connection between a gathering for worship and those who could not attend; it was not a mechanism for Eucharistic ministry in churches where a priest was not present. An added bonus was that extended communion could be administered by deacons or lay people.

The discussion included questions for clarification about possible non-adherence to the Thirty-Nine Articles. It was explained that the prohibition in the Articles to the Sacrament being ‘carried about’ (Articles 25 and 28) referred to parading and worshipping the Sacrament, not to transporting to communicants. It was also explained that litigation in England had pronounced that the instruction under General Directions for Public Worship (14e in the Church of Ireland *Book of Common Prayer*) ‘after administration’ for consumption of remaining consecrated bread and wine did not refer to the end of the service but rather to the point after which all communicants had received, including those not physically present.

LITURGICAL PROVISION IN CASES OF MISCARRIAGE, STILLBIRTH AND NEONATAL DEATH

Following a resolution in 2018, a Bill was brought forward providing for ‘the service of prayer and naming and funeral service in the cases of miscarriage, stillbirth and neonatal death’. The Liturgical Advisory Committee had looked for material in other Anglican provinces but had found little and so had consulted within the Church of Ireland with those who had particular experience of ministering in these situations. The Synod worked through a large number of detailed amendments before passing the Bill. During the debate and discussion, Synod listened respectfully as many members shared personal and pastoral experiences of this difficult issue.

DIOCESAN BOUNDARIES

A Bill was passed which was brought in at the request of the diocesan synods of the United Diocese of Tuam, Killala and Achonry and the United Diocese of Limerick and Killaloe regarding diocesan boundaries. The Bill at this Synod provided for the union of their dioceses under one bishop at a future date as yet unidentified. In addition, one group of parishes in the Diocese of Achonry (Ballisodare) had expressed a preference to transfer to the Diocese of Elphin. This matter had been the subject of the 2016 report of the Commission on Episcopal Ministry and of a Bill in 2018 to allow for the temporary suspension of the constitutional requirement for the calling of an electoral college if a vacancy arose in either diocese while this diocesan union was considered.

The matter was referred back to the two diocesan synods to pass resolutions agreeing to these provisions. The union will then come into effect when there is an episcopal vacancy in either diocese: the remaining bishop will become the Bishop for the United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe. When it comes into effect, the Church of Ireland will have 11 dioceses/united dioceses rather than 12, 6 in the Province of Armagh and 5 in the Province of Dublin. In accordance with the Constitution, the Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin have given their consent to the alteration in provincial boundaries.

The Bill also made provision for an episcopal vacancy occurring before the resolutions were passed by both diocesan synods. It further addressed the immediate and longer-term consequences of the union: these included the bishop's residence; diocesan council meetings; representation on General Synod; membership of central church committees; prebendal stalls in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin; and episcopal electoral colleges. Authority to make arrangements for issues not covered in the Bill was given to Standing Committee and the Representative Body.

During the debate, it was noted that it had begun as a difficult and contentious issue, but through trust in local people a way had been found to move the issue forward for the good of the whole Church. It was hoped that this 'bottom-up' process might be considered for future difficult issues.

GENERAL SYNOD MEMBERSHIP

In 2018 a Bill was brought by private members of Synod to amend the principles on which clerical and lay representatives of General Synod were apportioned across the dioceses, leading to a reduction of just over 100 members. A number of amendments were tabled with different methodologies for change; after the second reading the Bill was withdrawn and Standing Committee was asked to consider the Bill and the amendments and bring a report and legislative proposals to Synod. The report outlined a number of key principles, proposals

for change and a timeline for phased implementation. General Synod welcomed and adopted the report, endorsed the principles and looked forward to the presentation of a Bill at General Synod 2020.

doi:10.1017/S0956618X19001844

General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church

June 2019

JOHN F STUART

Secretary General of the Scottish Episcopal Church

INTRODUCTION

The General Synod met at St Paul's and St George's church in Edinburgh from 6 to 8 June. In his opening charge to Synod, the Primus, the Most Revd Mark Strange, encouraged Synod members to listen to the voice of God and respond to the command 'this is the way, walk in it'. The Scottish Episcopal Church needed to be able to respond to a society crying out for reconciliation, fairness and hope but could only do so if, inside the Church, such values marked the way in which members treated one another.

ALTERATIONS TO CANONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Changes to the Church's Code of Canons require a two-year process, comprising a first reading at General Synod, followed by consideration of the proposed change by diocesan synods and then a second reading by the General Synod the following year. At first reading stage, the change requires a simple majority in the separate houses of bishops, clergy and laity. At second reading stage, a two-thirds majority in each house is needed. In 2019, there were no Canons for first reading but amendments to two Canons received a second reading.

Canon 35 (Of the Structure, Furniture and Monuments of Churches, and the Due Care Thereof) sets out a process for obtaining consent to alterations to church buildings (as 'faculties' as such do not feature in the Scottish Episcopal Church). Second reading approval was given to a change to include church curtilages within the scope of the Canon, since there had