

General Synod summary July 2021

General Synod met on 9th to 12th July. This meeting was to have been held in-person, but was transferred to zoom when the final step of the roadmap out of lockdown was delayed to 19th July.

I've taken a slightly different approach to summarising the meeting this time. Below are simply some things to give thanks for based on a list assembled by a group of colleagues on Synod. More detail of all of the proceedings is available on the C of E website. Do ask me if you'd like more information.

1. Relevant and winsome contributions from many.
2. The way of electing people to the commission that appoints bishops (Crown Nominations Commission) was changed to ensure "Responsible Representation".
3. Caution was expressed by some about the relationship with the Methodist Church, but it was agreed to appoint a body to oversee further discussions on the Anglican-Methodist covenant.
4. We expressed concern for the marginalised: the homeless, ethnic minorities, children and vulnerable adults.
5. Ways of supporting those who cannot accept the ministry of women bishops and priests for theological reasons (the existing *Five Guiding Principles, Mutual Flourishing*) were noted.
6. We affirmed that we wanted to be a Christ-centred church (part of the *Vision and Strategy* initiative).
7. Progress was made towards making the Clergy Discipline rules fairer and implemented more quickly.
8. Although many expressed dismay that we can't yet afford a Racial Justice officer in each diocese, it is hoped to do so in the future. (See *From Lament to Action: Report of the Archbishops' Anti Racism Taskforce*).
9. Church Representation Rules were amended so that there is not, by default, a limit of two 3-year terms for Deanery Synod Lay Representatives.

Thank you for your prayers. Seeking to be authentic Christians in a sometimes-difficult environment – especially with meetings held online – has been possible only through the encouragement and prayers of our friends, and by some of us starting each session around the Word of God, and praying with and for each other.

The Synod has now been dissolved after six years, and a new one will be elected later in the summer. Please pray for gracious, wise and faithful people to be elected, who will "*contend for the faith once and for all entrusted to God's holy people*" (Jude 3).

Andrew Bell